The Idea of Europe in Husserl's Phenomenology

A Study in Generativity and Historicity

To my father Martti and my mother Sirpa

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"Die Philosophie ist eigentlich Heimweh
— *Trieb überall zu Hause zu seyn.*"

"Philosophy is really homesickness
— *the desire to be everywhere at home.*"

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I do not recall the exact moment when philosophy entered my life. Perhaps it was one of those events when childlike idleness turns into curiosity and wonder, into a realization that not all questions can be answered in a simple and an unequivocal manner. Instead of a single spark – what Plato means when he speaks of *exaiphnes*, "the sudden" – the burning urge for questioning and debating was kindled by a series of amazements, encounters and engagements. What is certain is that philosophy, as I came to understand it, involved a special relation not only to one's inner life but to the outside world – to culture, nature, art and politics.

Philosophy is, as I also argue in this work, a way of thinking that finds its genuine essence only within a shared framework. There are no philosophies in the plural. To philosophize is therefore to be in debt to fellow philosophers – past and present – but it also entails a fundamental openness towards the coming community, a shared responsibility for the common task.

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Timo Miettinen

Abstract

In contemporary debates, the concept of Europe is most often discussed and defined in terms of a geographical, cultural-historical, political, or even as an economic entity. This dissertation aims at reinstituting the philosophical relevance of this concept by articulating a new understanding of one of its guiding intellectual motives: the idea of universalism. Against the typically modern understanding of this idea – most evident in the violent and unilateral history of European expansionism – this work provides a new articulation of this idea as a necessarily pluralistic and self-critical category of historical and intercultural reflection.

This work has its methodological and conceptual background in the philosophical work of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938). Late in his career, Husserl – the founder of modern phenomenology – composed a series of essays and lectures discussing the topic of Europe, its philosophical idea and teleological-spiritual history. These texts, which had their imminent background in the devastating experience of the First World War (1914–1918) and the consequent political turmoil of the Weimar Republic, took their point of departure from the overall cultural "crisis" of European humanity, which seemed to lose its confidence in the founding ideas of modernity, most importantly, in the idea of universal reason within the domains of scientific and political activity.

The argument of this work is based on a conviction according to which Husserl's late reflections on Europe should not be treated as mere analyses of contemporary criticism, but as serious phenomenological reflections on the particular topics of generativity and historicity, that is, those forms of meaning-creation that take place in interpersonal, intergenerational and geo-historical processes of co-operation. Through his reflections on

Europe, it is argued, Husserl presented the most compelling and radical interpretation on the intersubjective, communal and historical dimensions of phenomenology, announcing itself in the novel understanding of philosophy as an essentially normative undertaking.

The dissertation is divided into four parts. The first part of the work deals with the idea of crisis as the point of departure for Husserl's reflections. By discussing the intellectual history of this concept and its connections to the basic presuppositions of the historical and political thought of modernity, it shows how Husserl's own reflections aimed at a radical reinterpretation of the idea of crisis in terms of a necessary category of historical development. The second part focuses on the general methodological and conceptual approach of Husserl's late phenomenology of generativity. It argues that Husserlian phenomenology – often considered as a mere instantiation of modern transcendental philosophy – should not be restricted to the domain of individual consciousness but rather provides a rich and indispensable conceptual framework for understanding social, cultural, and political phenomena. The third part of the work discusses Husserl's analysis of Greek philosophy as the teleological origin of Europe. By focusing on a series of manuscripts, this part delineates a new articulation of philosophy as a specifically generative phenomenon that unfolds in the new understanding of rational life, communal co-operation and political universalism. Finally, on the basis of the aforementioned insights, the fourth part of the work goes on to articulate a new constructive account of philosophical universalism, necessarily accompanied by a renewed understanding of historical teleology and political idealism. Alongside with Husserl's strong emphasis on Greek philosophy for a renewed understanding of universalism, this work shows the necessity of establishing a dialogue with another central variation of this idea, that of Christian experience articulated by St. Paul.

Introduction

For one reason or another, Europe seems to be the sole continent that has serious difficulties in defining its own borders. Historically speaking, Europe has defined itself with regard to numerous sets of frontiers, beginning from Anaximander's (c. 610–546 BC) and Hecataeus' (c. 550 BC–c. 476 BC) identification of the rivers Nile and Phasis as separating Europe from the continents of Libya and Asia. As a territorial entity, however, Europe has never been unequivocal; its history is that of an ambiguous, even chameleonic figure. We are familiar with the story of princess Europa being abducted by Zeus from Phoenicia to Crete, referring to the ideas of transgression and unfamiliarity as the basic characteristics of this figure. Although we are accustomed to consider mainland Attica of the Classical period as the heart of Europe, Aristotle, for one, situated the Greeks between the peoples of Asia and Europe, the first being slavish by nature while the latter "full of spirit but somewhat deficient in intelligence and skill [...] lacking in political organization and capacity to rule their neighbors".[1] All in all, it is an inherent characteristic of European history that it is constant transgression and reorganization of national, ethnic, and cultural limits. In terms of political agenda, the rapid expansion of the European Union since the mid-1990s has raised new questions about the extent of Europe – for instance, are countries such as Turkey or Ukraine really a part of Europe? – entailing a new geo-political relevance of the territorial definition of Europe.[2] On different cultural, historical and even economic grounds, many critics have given up on the idea of Europe as a fixed territorial area and tried to define it in terms of "fuzzy borders" or "concentric circles," describing the fluctuating and overlapping character of its boundaries.[3]

[1] Aristotle, *Pol.* VII.1327b23–26.
[2] So far, Morocco has been the only country that has been denied membership in the EU on geographical grounds.
[3] See Mertes & Prill 1990; Zielonka 2003.

In the contemporary debates, we are of course familiar with this specific transitivity of limits under the title of "globalization". From the Great Commission of Early Christianity to the different forms of European-Western imperialism and colonialism, as well as the more contemporary forms of economic cross-border exchange, it seems that the history of European nations has not unfolded as one of "sacred limits" but, on the contrary, of "barriers" to be overcome.[4] In this regard, the history of Europe is inseparable from the motive of universalism – articulating itself in the philosophical, social, juridical, and geo-political developments of the past two and a half millennia. And as we know, this development, despite some undeniably positive consequences, has also been quite harmful: the modern and pre-modern ventures to overcome borders have not realized themselves through reciprocal dialogue but too often by means of the unilateral politics of force. Universal values have not been negotiated but exported; moreover, they have been accompanied by culturally specific practices such as centralized political institutions, Christian religious practices, the capitalist market-economy, and so on. Not all borders have vanished, however, but new kinds of borders have been and are in the making. Instead of the threefold division between the domains of capitalist market-economy, state-socialism, and the non-aligned countries of the Third World, we are now dividing the cultural and geo-political space according to the "old but new" polarities of Europe vs. the Islamic World, Europe vs. the rising economies and so on. Despite the successful project of European political integration since the beginning of the 1950s, we have also witnessed growing disparities within Europe itself – resulting from the never-ending series of financial crises, the status of national economies and the level of education – which, instead of the old division between East and West, announce themselves in the novel dictum of South and North.

As a consequence of this development, I believe, the idea of universalism has fallen between two competing strains of interpretation. On the one hand, universalism is acknowledged ever more firmly as the necessary point of departure for a genuine democratic culture – both national as well as global. A welfare state, it is argued, cannot exist without universal healthcare and social security; a global democratic order must be found-

[4] Marx 1993: 408.

ed on universal human rights. In the discussions concerning the status of minorities, principles of universalism are often promulgated as the best way to enhance the voices of the less heard: a revealing example of the indisputability of universalism can be found in the UN's Vienna declaration of 1993, which firmly states that "the *universal nature* of these rights and freedoms is *beyond question*."[5] On the other hand, during the last few decades universalism has also been disparaged to the point that, at least in academic discourse, it has found little unconditional support. Following the works of theoreticians such as Edward Said and Immanuel Wallerstein, universalism – as a typically European or Western phenomenon – has been associated with colonialism, imperialism and even totalitarianism; further, it has become common to treat this idea as a product of the Euro-centric and "instrumental" rationality of the Enlightenment period.[6] Thus, it is often stressed that, for instance, the discourse on new European identity should take its point of departure from concepts and categories that are explicitly non-universalistic, or, as Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) has put it: simply *provincial*.[7] For our contemporary theoretical framework, cultural particularism seems to be the only serious alternative to universalism.

[5] *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993.

[6] In his thoughtful work *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (2006), Immanuel Wallerstein offers a rather sketchy but provoking history of European universalism beginning from the colonialism of the 15th century to the present moment. Rather than equating it with imperialism as such, Wallerstein – one of the great thinkers of the modern global system – sees universalism as a "rhetorical device" inherent in the European-Occidental tradition, as something that "has been put forward by pan-European leaders and intellectuals in their quest to pursue the interests of the dominant strata of the modern world-system" (Wallerstein 2006: xiv). From the Spanish conquistadores to the Bush administration, this rhetoric has been used to justify the suppression of "barbaric" peoples, the ending of alien practices and the destructive leveling of unique cultural features. Rather than serving as a means for true unification, universalism has been employed as a means of *exclusion*, of segregation. What makes Wallerstein's approach particularly compelling is his inclination (as manifested in the third part of the book, "Scientific universalism") to read the history of universalism, not merely in standard practical-political terms, but also as resulting from the inner contradictions of the modern scientific worldview, more precisely, from the split between the "two cultures" of techno-scientist and cultural-humanistic enterprise. The domination of *Naturwissenschaften* over *Geisteswissenschaften*, the hegemony of the objectivist and value-free investigation, has contributed to the propagation of seemingly neutral ideal of knowledge and the loss of cultural sensitivity, which, as Wallerstein argues, has resulted in a complete neglecting of the systemic inequalities of what he considers to be the prevalent form of modern universalism, namely, global capitalism (Wallerstein 1999; 2001).

[7] Chakrabarty 2000. On demands of European "particularism", see e.g. Passerini 2007: 107ff.

In the preface to his work *Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, 1936), Edmund Husserl posed the question on the nature of this universalizing development with the expression "spectacle of Europeanization" (*Schauspiel der Europäisierung*).[8] Leaving aside its precise historical character, Husserl asked whether this process could be understood according to an "absolute sense", as distinct from what he called its "historical nonsense". What this distinction seemed to imply was that for Husserl, despite the unjust history of the European-Occidental universalism – founded on the "naive and (if carefully thought through) even absurd rationalism [of the eighteenth century]"[9] – the dissolution of cultural limits hid within itself a more profound sense, one that perhaps resisted the inextricably unilateral and violent realization of this idea. The reader, however, finds no further evidence for this claim in the *Crisis*: in the published Biemel-edition (orig. publ. 1954) of the work, Husserl never really explicitly returned to the question on the absolute or proper sense of Europeanization. Instead, the vagueness of Husserl's remarks has enhanced his reputation as an uncritically Euro-centric philosopher.

* * *

This dissertation discusses the ideas of Europe and European universalism within the framework of Husserlian phenomenology. It is the key argument of this work that Husserl's late reflections on Europe should not be read either as departures from his early transcendental phenomenology or as simple exercises of cultural criticism, but as systematic phenomenological reflections on the particular topics of *generativity* and *historicity*. Through his reflections on Europe, I argue, Husserl presented the most compelling and radical interpretation on the intersubjective, communal and historical dimensions of phenomenology, announcing itself in a novel understanding of philosophy as an essentially normative undertaking.

The theoretical aim of this work is twofold. First, I aim at articulating a novel understanding of the idea of universalism on the basis of Husserl's

[8] HuaVI: 14
[9] Ibid.

late transcendental phenomenology. It is my conviction that Husserl's late reflections provide us with an idea of philosophy that based its claim of theoretical universality not on a Cartesian-Kantian idea of self-reflecting subjectivity but on a plurality of historical traditions and possible standpoints. This entailed that philosophy, in its pretension to universality, was to be conceived in terms of a geo-social-historical movement that articulates itself always *from within* a particular tradition, but also *in a critical relation* towards this tradition. Instead of a final and absolute standpoint, the universal could only be thought in terms of an infinite task, i.e., as constant reflexivity and *perpetual renewal* that has its infinitely open horizon over the course of generations. Secondly, by discussing the idea of teleological-historical reflection on the basis of Husserl's work, I aim at articulating a novel understanding of the ideas of *historical teleology* and *progress*. These ideas – usually interpreted as the watershed between the project of modern philosophy and its critical renditions in the *postmodern* tradition – were mainly discussed by Husserl only in his unpublished works; however, I believe that his somewhat heterogeneous and scattershot remarks provide a new understanding of these ideas as phenomenological concepts. For Husserlian phenomenology, I argue, teleology and progress are to be understood as categories of historical reflection that are guided by the idea of phenomenological *epoché* (i.e. "rendering inoperative") and thus they are to be conceived (i) critical towards all particular accounts of historical development, and (ii) something which emerge in the present moment. Instead of a Kantian-Hegelian concept of historical teleology as a narrative of inevitable progress, or its renditions in the Nietzschean-Spenglerian formulations of inevitable decline, the historical thinking of phenomenology ought to be understood in terms of the "bracketing" of all particular accounts or narratives of historical development.[10] Instead of a pre-given theodicy, the phenomenological idea of teleology is best understood as a *post-theological* or *post-metaphysical* – but not post-modern – concept,

[10] With the concepts of narrative and narrativity I am basically referring to the discourse inaugurated by Paul Ricoeur, who discusses these concepts in relation to the phenomenological theory of subjectivity. Instead of denoting any kind of "mythical" or "fictive" account of the constitution of subjectivity, Ricoeur uses these notions in order to illuminate the fundamental element of "story-telling" that is essential to the constitution of (temporal) identities: my self-understanding is inextricably tied to the question of how I "narrate" my life from the perspective of the present moment. On the idea of narrativity in relation to Husserlian phenomenology, see Carr 1986.

which takes its point of departure from the peculiar "questioning-back" of the inherited validities and meanings. By doing so, this idea of teleology provides us with a notion of progress not as a category of being but of practical reason: progress is not something we must simply believe in, but it can and must be *willed* on the basis of the present moment.

On the basis of these reflections, I will show that Husserl's idea of Europe was not to be understood either as the herald of progress or the end of history but as the latent possibility of a universal idea of communality and reciprocal critique, announcing itself in the different forms of cultural, territorial and historical universality. For Husserl, this idea of Europe was as much a promise as it was an existing history, unfolding only in the partial and perhaps even fundamentally skewed forms of this universality. As a normative ideal of culture and generative development, however, this idea was to remain fundamentally inexhaustible, calling for its constant rearticulation in the horizon of the infinite task of philosophical undertaking.

Generativity and historicity as phenomenological notions

This dissertation approaches the subject of Europe from the viewpoint of two specific topics: generativity and historicity. With the topic of generativity (*Generativität*) Husserl basically referred to the "unity of historical development in its widest sense"[11], that is, to all those forms of meaning-constitution that take place in the intersubjective and intergenerational processes of co-operation, expressing themselves in the form of lasting cultural accomplishments. We are of course familiar with a wide variety of these forms, beginning with simple cultural practices (e.g., eating, handicraft) to the development of political and social institutions, religious practices, and the scientific enterprise. Although these forms differ from each other in several respects, they share a common feature of *tradi-*

[11] HuaXXIX: 63.

tionality – they are all something "passed forward" (Lat. *tradere*) down the generations – and thus have their origin or future horizon *beyond* the finite life of the individual subject. In this regard, Husserl's analyses on generativity significantly broadened the scope of phenomenology to include those forms of meaning and validity that are appropriated not through simple acts of institution performed by an individual (e.g. perception and its correlates) but on the basis of an inherited tradition – its assimilation, imitation, or critical refutation. In this regard, the topic of generativity opened up a novel dimension in what Husserl called the "paradox of subjectivity" – the idea according to which we are beings who both constitute the world as well as belong to this world as constituted – that of cultural subjectivity and objectivity (facticity). Culture and tradition are indeed something created and transformed by a particular community; however, it is exactly by appropriating these structures (e.g. by learning a language) that we become members a community in the first place.

The topic of generativity was anticipated, first of all, in Husserl's growing interest towards the topic of intersubjectivity since the first decade of the 1900s. Beginning with his analyses on "alien experience" (*Fremderfahrung*) and "empathy" (*Einfühlung*) in the experience of the first person, Husserl gradually broadened his analyses of interpersonal associations in order to clarify the constitution of objectivity and the spiritual world (i.e., the world of cultural meanings). What Husserl now argued was that all objective meanings, as they unfold in the experience of the conscious subject, can never be explained simply on the basis of an individual subjectivity, but the subject's experience must necessarily entail an element of otherness. Without the constitutive support of other subjects, there simply would be no idea of an objective world, which transcends my subjective perspective. Actually, the objectivity and reality of things is constantly confirmed or refuted by other subjects, or even negotiated with them: whether things or entities such as Northern Lights, the common spirit of a time, or the state of Finland actually exist depends on a wide variety of reciprocal "social acts" through which the objectivity and sense of the aforementioned phenomena is validated. Thus, the phenomenological "social ontology", as Husserl understood it, did not demarcate only a particular region of human activity, but it permeated the very foundations of the constituting capacities of transcendental subjectivity.

The idea of generativity had its background not just in topical inquiries but also in Husserl's novel *genetic method* of phenomenology. Developed and employed from the late 1910s onwards, the genetic method was introduced as a complementary approach to the so-called static phenomenology. Whereas the static investigations, as they were entertained in Husserl's earlier works such as the *Logical Investigations* (1900–01) and the first volume of *Ideas* (1911), had considered the different modes of intentionality as something ready-made, the genetic method broadened the scope of phenomenological analyses by opening up the questions concerning the dynamic relations of these modes. The different modes of intentionality could be seen and analyzed on the basis of their type and content – there are, for instance, acts of perceiving, valuing, and doing, of kinesthesia – but they could also be examined on the basis of their relations of temporal foundation. Moreover, different acts were not to be conceived as mere fleeting experiences, but as temporal forms which constitute lasting convictions, tendencies, and orientations. There forms were not to be understood as mere empirical characters, but as transcendental features that come to define the constituting activity of the ego. Thus through the genetic method, Husserl was able to account for the temporally evolving character of conscious life as well as its correlates, analyzed through the notions of *habituality* and *sedimentation*.

In his published works, Husserl employed the genetic method primarily in order to account for those forms of intentionality and meaning-constitution that take place within the conscious life of the individual. However, through his growing interest towards the problems of cultural and historical processes of meaning-constitution – especially those relating to scientific rationality – he also began to discuss communities and interpersonal relations as specific forms of habituation and sedimentation. The development of science and scientific rationality, for instance, was not to be understood merely in terms of a specific individual attitude (e.g. the natural scientific attitude), but as a specific mode of co-operation and production of a community of scientists. As in the case of an orchestra and its common accomplishments (musical pieces), the end product of scientific community could not be explicated in terms of individual scientists: it was to be understood as a result of the genuinely shared activity of a personal community. These developments led Husserl to his often disputed account

of "we-subjectivities" or "personalities of a higher order", the idea of communities as personal wholes that pertain within themselves a constitutive dimension of their own that is irreducible to individual subjects.

This transition encroached also upon the very core of Husserl's own philosophical methodology. Especially in his last works, Husserl began to discuss the phenomenological enterprise in terms of separate "ways" to the core of his methodology, the transcendental-phenomenological reduction. Beginning with the 1907 lecture course *The Idea of Phenomenology*, Husserl introduced the notion of reduction as the point of departure for the establishment of a phenomenological "critique of reason", constituting the idea of a genuine and rigorous science. This reduction, argued Husserl, was to be conceived of as a specific activity of the philosophizing individual, and it was based on a specific "bracketing" of the prejudices (*Voraussetzungen*) and judgments (*Urteile*) of the so-called natural attitude.[12] This step, the phenomenological *epoché*, was supposed to lead him to what he conceived as the most fundamental and concrete foundation of meaning-constitution: the domain of "pure ego" or "absolute consciousness". This domain was disclosed for the purpose of describing the fundamental relations of dependency that define the constitution of all objectivity – nature and culture, science and religion. However, this idea of fundamental inquiries sparked off a wide variety of criticisms concerning the idealistic or even solipsistic character of Husserl's phenomenology. Theodor Adorno, for one, understood Husserl's reduction in the Kantian sense of a return to the absolute and atemporal structures of consciousness. As Adorno claimed, behind Husserl's principle of principles – i.e., the idea according to which all cognition must derived its legitimacy from the intuitive givenness for an ego – was "nothing but the old *idealist principle* that the *subjective data* of our consciousness are the ultimate source of knowledge, and that therefore any fundamental philosophical analysis must be an analysis of consciousness."[13] Therefore the sole domain of Husserl's investigations was to be located in "subjectivity in its abstractness, [which is] the pure function of thinking, the "I think" in the sense of the Kantian unity of consciousness."[14]

[12] HuaII: 43ff.
[13] Adorno 1986: 134.
[14] Ibid.

Husserl never gave up on the idea of reduction as the fundamental and necessary point of departure; however, his later works pointed towards a radical reformulation of this idea. In addition to the idea of phenomenological reduction through "Cartesian" reflections – reflections on the constituting subjectivity as the ground of all meaning – Husserl presented the reduction as proceeding through a critical "questioning-back" (*rückfragen*) to the historical presuppositions of the common horizon of communal interaction: the lifeworld.[15] Although traditional Husserl-scholarship has considered the different ways mainly as complementary, the manuscripts of the *Crisis*-period actually reveal the primacy of the historical-communal approach, i.e. the way through generativity.[16] This entailed that Husserl could no longer simply separate between the domains of systematic and historical investigation meaning that philosophy could only be understood as a specific "intertwining" (*Verflechtung*) of the two.[17]

As I will argue in this work, it was only through the reflections on *historicity* that Husserl could account for the unique teleological character of scientific rationality, which finds its genuine realization only in the form of the infinite task of philosophy. Philosophy, understood as the total horizon of ideal and universal truths, could only be captured through partial descriptions that – due to the signitive or symbolic character of human language – were constantly prone to the loss of their intuitive foundation. This entailed that the peculiar universality of phenomenology could only be accounted for as an essentially temporal and intergenerational idea of striving. Instead of protecting itself against the loss of meaning, phenomenology was to understand its claim for universality on the basis of this constant possibility of crisis. In this regard, history was not the obstacle, but the condition of a genuinely universal position.

Even more importantly, the generative and historical dimensions articulated a novel understanding of phenomenology as a *normative* undertaking. Already in his earliest works, Husserl had introduced the phe-

[15] The most extensive analyses of the concept of lifeworld can be found in Husserl's later texts, especially in the *Crisis*-work, even though he introduced the term already as a part of *Ideen II* (dated at 1917). In this early discussion the term "lifeworld" is closely connected to what Husserl calls the "natural world-concept" (*natürliche Weltbegriff*), the world of personal and cultural accomplishments as distinguished from the world of the natural sciences. See Carr 1977; Steinbock 1995: 86ff.

[16] See HuaXXIX: 399, 424–426.

[17] HuaVI: 364.

nomenological method in order to provide a universal theory of intuitive evidence that could have laid the foundation for all types of givenness: of sensuous and categorical, or theoretical, practical, and axiological (i.e. acts of perceiving, willing, and valuing). Despite his dominating interest in the problematic of scientific evidence, phenomenology was supposed to lay the foundation for a novel approach to the problematic of ethical and moral cognition (discussed especially in the series of lectures on ethics from the early 1900s). In his later works, however, phenomenology was now related to a novel understanding of philosophy as a specific form of praxis, which does not simply leave behind all commitments to the natural world, but which formulates its claim for universality in relation to these commitments. Phenomenological reflection, in this regard, was understood in relation to a renewed understanding on the relationship between the domains of theory and praxis, united by the idea of self-responsibility through perpetual renewal. This idea of historical-generative universality, I argue, provides us with a novel possibility of articulating the political dimension of Husserlian phenomenology on the basis of a dynamic and generative concept of political idealism.

Europe as a philosophical topic

It is by no means an unproblematic fact that we should take Europe as denoting an idea. Europe is, first and foremost, a *name* (or a proper noun) and as such, it denotes a particular being and not a general idea or concept. According to our common use of the word, "Europe" stands for a particular geographical, historical, cultural, or a political-economic entity that can be defined in relation to other respective entities.[18] In the Classical world, the territorial entity of Europe was most often distinguished from Africa and Asia, whereas modern geography treats it as one of the seven major continents. From the period of Charlemagne (c. 742–814) to the 17th century, Europe was employed rather synonymously with the

[18] For an excellent overview of the development of the idea of Europe, see Mikkeli 1998. On Europe as a "variable notion", see Brague 2002: 17.

cultural and political sphere of Western Christendom, followed by the territorial matrix of European states in the Peace of Westphalia (1648). Although the idea of a politically unified Europe was already within sight of the Catholic Church, this idea gained a novel weight against the backdrop of the rise of the Ottoman Empire from the 14th century onwards. Through the long series of conflicts such as the Ottoman–Hungarian wars (14th century onwards), the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the Great Turkish War (1667–1683), Europe gained a novel sense of its identity as being against the Islamic world. Ironically, the thinkers and writers of the Islamic world conceived of themselves as the inheritors of the Graeco-Roman philosophy and science, and had preserved some of its most important sources during the European Middle Ages. Due to the rapid growth of industrial competition from the 19th and early 20th century onwards, Europe, despite its significant internal tensions, was defined more and more in relation to the new global superpowers such as the USA, Japan and Russia. During the Cold War, the definition of Europe remained essentially ambiguous – defined by the perspectives of competing ideological standpoints – although in general this notion was more affiliated with the West-leaning countries of the continent. Especially in the post-1989 academic literature, as a result of the loss of geo-political otherness, some theorists have entertained the idea of Europe's own past as its new peculiar other. According to this understanding, it has become one of the constitutive features of Europe's self-understanding that it has moved from the idea of territorial otherness to "temporal othering" (a somewhat clumsy expression of Thomas Diez[19]) – denoting the insistence that the events of 1914–1919, 1939–1945, or the Balkan Wars of 1991–2001 "shall never happen again" – which is supposed to open up new possibilities of political identity based on cosmopolitanism. It has been asked, for instance, whether the European Union should include all those countries that are willing to accept those values we consider as "European" such as universal human rights, democratic constitution, the rule of law, social market-economy, freedom of the press, and so on.

It was perhaps Hegel who was the first to treat Europe not only as a geo-historical or geo-political entity but also as a *philosophical* concept. In his lectures on the philosophy of world-history, Hegel introduced the

[19] Diez 2004.

threefold division of Africa, Asia and Europe as a complementary description to the unfolding of world-historical spirit (*Geist*) through Oriental, Greek, Roman, and the Germanic worlds. What Hegel discovered in Europe was not a mere historical culture among others but a general "spiritual unity" manifesting itself in a specific understanding of reason and rational life. For Hegel, Europe stood for nothing less than the triumph of spirit and its *raison d'être* – the progress of human freedom – in the "retreat from this boundless freedom [of Asian and African peoples] into the particular, of control of the immoderate and elevation of the particular to the universal, and of the descent of the spirit into itself."[20] Thus Europe, as Hegel understood it, stood for a certain ideal of rational life finding its genuine platform in the reconciliation of individual freedom with its necessary social constraints, of spontaneity with stable political institutions. As we may learn from Hegel's earlier works – beginning with the *Phenomenology of Spirit* – this universality could only be attained through a process of reciprocal recognition (*Anerkennen*) of human individuals, which brings the relations of domination (i.e., the dialectics of Master and Slave) to their completion. According to the key thesis of his *Philosophy of Right*, this process found its most concrete realization in the modern nation-states founded on Christian principles, dividing the sphere of communality into social (family, marriage) and political (the civil society) domains. But it was exactly for this reason that Europe could "go beyond" its geographical bounds and to announce itself, for instance, in the historical traditions of America, the Slavic peoples, or even in Haiti (whose revolutionary movement of the 1790s was interpreted by Hegel as the universal triumph of spirit[21]). Whether their social and political institutions (for instance marriage, mass communication, civil society) would follow the path treaded by Europe was debatable – what was important was that they followed the same principle of spiritual development as the European nations.

Hegel's ideas were highly disputed already in his time. Soon after his death in 1831 the philosophical legacy of Hegel – especially that relating to his account of European modernity – was basically divided into two opposing groups. Against the conservative interpretation of the Old (or Right) Hegelians who basically argued for the completeness of post-1789

[20] Hegel 1975: 173.
[21] See Buck-Morss 2009: 64.

political institutions, there emerged a group of Young (i.e. Leftist) Hegelians who demanded for a more radical reform of the Prussian state. Marx – who became affiliated with the Young Hegelians due to his relations with some of its most influential members such as Arnold Ruge and Ludwig Feuerbach – shared this conviction of the necessity of reform; however, unlike the bourgeoisie revolution envisioned by Ruge, the Marxist revolution was to be performed by the class of proletariats. More importantly, against the national revolution of 1789, the socialist revolution was to be executed on an international level. Especially for the Marx of the *Communist Manifesto* – written in the "year of revolutions" of 1848 – the name for this level was nothing less than Europe, haunted by the "specter of Communism". What the year of 1848 had introduced was a novel stage in the intellectual consciousness of the European political body, articulating itself in the sublation of the opposition between republic and monarchy. Thus instead of a pre-given utopia of social and political institutions, Marx introduced the reformatory potential of communism that was to be found in the "real movement that abolishes the present state of things."[22]

It was perhaps Nietzsche who was the first to locate and criticize the inherent presupposition of the historical consciousness of modernity, its unwavering faith in Europe as the torchbearer of human freedom. In his *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (1886), Nietzsche spoke of Europe as the "protruding peninsula" of Asia, which, in contrast to this continent of age-old wisdom and spirituality, "would like to represent the 'progress of man'."[23] Instead of the triumph of spirit, Europe was the name for the specific feeling of melancholy in regard to its lost origin, against which the contemporary European appeared as nothing but "a herd animal, something obliging, sickly, and mediocre."[24] In his late fragments assembled together under the title *The Will to Power* (written in 1883–1888), Nietzsche articulated this analysis on the development of the European modernity in terms of a "radical nihilism". This nihilism showed itself in what he called the "devaluation" of all higher values – values of "humanity" and "morality", of "good" and "educated" – a development that was inscribed in the very structure of these values due to their life-deny-

[22] Marx and Engels 1970: 57.
[23] "Europa, das durchaus gegen Asien den „Fortschritt des Menschen" bedeuten möchte […]." KSA 5.72.
[24] KSA 5.81.

ing character. In the paragraph 395 of this work, Nietzsche spoke of this tendency in terms of a specific European sickness:

> "Illness makes men better": this well-known assertion that runs through the centuries, and in the mouth of the wise quite as often as in the mouth and jaw of the people, really makes one think. In view of discovering whether there is any truth in it, one might be allowed to ask whether there is not perhaps a fundamental relationship between morality and illness? Regarded as a whole, could not the "improvement of mankind" – [...] the unquestionable softening, humanizing, and taming which the European has undergone within the last two centuries – be regarded as the result of a long course of secret and uncanny suffering, failure, abstinence, and grief? Has "illness" made the European better?[25]

As is well known, Nietzsche's answer to the last question was negative. For him, the "illness" of Europe, synonymous to the idea of morality, was codified into the very structures of its historical development: by restraining (i.e., by "softening, humanizing, and taming") the physiological drives and instincts of the healthy individual, the European morality had suppressed its natural sense of life. This condition, argued Nietzsche, could only be overcome by what he called the free-spirited "good European" – the one who overcomes the rationalistic, Christian and nationalistic tendencies for the sake of a new artistic, post-Christian and cosmopolitan way of life.[26]

Although Husserl's reflections on Europe followed the Hegelian dictum of spirituality – Husserl spoke of the *spiritual* "geography", "form", "culture", and "unity" of Europe – his reflections followed the approach of Nietzsche at least in one crucial respect. Instead of taking his point of de-

[25] "„Die Krankheit macht den Menschen besser": diese berühmte Behauptung, der man durch alle Jahrhunderte begegnet, und zwar im Munde der Weisen ebenso als im Mund und Maule des Volks, gibt zu denken. Man möchte sich, auf ihre Gültigkeit hin, einmal erlauben zu fragen: gibt es vielleicht ein ursächliches Band zwischen Moral und Krankheit überhaupt? Die „Verbesserung des Menschen", im Großen betrachtet, zum Beispiel die unleugbare Milderung Vermenschlichung Vergutmüthigung des Europäers innerhalb des letzten Jahrtausends — ist sie vielleicht die Folge eines langen heimlich-unheimlichen Leidens und Mißrathens, Entbehrens, Verkümmerns? Hat „die Krankheit" den Europäer „besser gemacht"?" KSA 12.180. Cf. KSA 12.241–242: "erst aus der ganzen Krankheit der Zeit heraus müssen sie [Europa] zu ihrer Gesundheit kommen."

[26] Cf. especially the aphorisms in the "Nachgelassene Fragmente" of 1884: "gegen die Gleichheit / gegen die moralische Tartüfferie / gegen das Christenthum und Gott / gegen das Nationale – der gute Europäer." On the idea of "good European", see KSA 3.602, 3.631, 5.410

parture from the "triumph" of spirit or human freedom, Husserl founded his approach on a particular *cultural illness* that was also articulated in the title of his last major work: the "crisis" of Europe. Husserl understood this notion according to its classical medical connotations referring to the turning point of disease[27] – a crisis presents us with a choice: death or renewal – but unlike for Nietzsche, this disease did not result from the suppression or forgetfulness of original human instincts. What Nietzsche had considered as the modern devaluation of the higher values of mankind (of aim and unity, of the good and the beautiful) had been inscribed to the very structure of the modern scientific rationality since the 16th and 17th centuries. Through the triumph of modern natural sciences – which were founded on the Galilean discovery of exact mathematical ideality as the sole language of the universe – the ideas of teleology and normativity, sense and purpose, could no longer be acknowledged within the context of scientific rationality. As a result, Husserl claimed, although through a period of historical struggles concerning the character of the sciences of the spirit (*Geisteswissenschaften*), the purpose and value of human existence, of right and wrong, were gradually rendered into subjective phenomena that lack an objective grounding. Moreover, due to the radical conclusions of modern physicalist rationality drawn by Hobbes and his followers – their ideas concerning the mechanist and individualistic concept of human being – the very idea of human sociality seemed to lose its imminent naturality that had been the central credo of the Ancient social and political thought. The modern political body was, if not completely unnatural, constantly prone to disintegration.

Indeed, this was the general cultural condition articulated by Husserl in his writings of the post-WWI period. Already in the first texts of the 1920s, Husserl analyzed the contemporary situation of Europe as that of inner "vacuity", "mendacity" and "senselessness", referring to the novel loss of foundations in regard to the guiding ideas of individual and social reason.[28] Whereas the European humanity of the 19th century could still hold on to the ideas of scientific progress, technology, and the nation-state as the necessary foundations of a rational humanity, for the philosophers

[27] HuaVI: 315, 317, 550.

[28] HuaXXVII: 1. Cf. Husserl's statement on the "inner emptiness of the whole of European culture" (*innere Hohlheit die gesamte europäischen Kultur*) in HuaDokIV: 408.

of the early 20th century this faith could no longer be defended. What the Great War had shown was just how easily scientific innovations can be turned into means of destruction; how easily national solidarity can be agitated in order to serve the purpose of political terrorism. With the rise of Fascism during the 1920s and 1930s, Husserl could not but witness the growing "hostility towards the spirit"[29] that manifested itself not only in the horrendous militarily and political events of his time but in the denial of a genuine science of spirit and humanity.

Thus Husserl's concept of crisis, besides signifying a particular historical trait, seemed to denote also a general category of historical reflection. As Husserl put it in *Crisis*, what the "breakdown-situation" of his time had revealed was nothing less than the need of a genuine self-reflection, which would lead to the rearticulation of the ideals of rational humanity.[30] Here, Husserl's reflections were founded on his ethical writings dealing with the problematic of renewal (*Erneuerung*), a topic that was conceived from the viewpoint of communality already at the beginning of the 1920s. As Husserl had argued in his essays written for the Japanese journal *Kaizo* ("Renewal"), a phenomenological account of an ethical life could not be understood in terms of substantial imperatives but only as "dynamic-genetically", that is, through constant self-critique and self-reflexivity that motivate the regeneration of one's ideals and modes of action.[31] Already in these texts, Husserl argued for the indispensability of social ethics as the "full and genuine sense of ethics", suggesting that the genuine sense of renewal could only be attained and articulated as a communal process.

In the existing Husserl-scholarship, it has become somewhat common to acknowledge the idea of crisis as something that goes beyond the mere theoretical-scientific enterprise (e.g. the problems of psychologism) and touches upon the problematic of practical and ethical ideals. However, it is only a few commentators who have explicitly interpreted the concept of crisis as a category of generative phenomenology, referring to the idea of a necessary loss of intuitive evidence characteristic to the passing forward of a tradition.[32] In this regard, one of the most central works is

[29] HuaVI: 347.
[30] HuaVI: 59
[31] HuaXXVII: 57.
[32] The idea of crisis as a category of generative phenomenology has been suggested by Steinbock (1998b, 1998c).

Philip Buckley's *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (1992), which treats Husserl's idea of crisis as a specific "forgetfulness" characteristic to the development of all ideal meanings – but also a more specific possibility of a "permanent defeat" characteristic to the modern physicalist rationality. In this work I will take my point of departure from this distinction; however, I will argue that it is necessary to broaden the scope of Husserl's considerations to encompass also the social and political connotations of this "permanent defeat", the dissolution of the body politic through the egoistic and solitary subject of modern political philosophy.[33]

All in all, Husserl's late reflections on the idea of Europe have inspired a great number of philosophers. However, due to the rather controversial remarks of Husserl's in his later texts – remarks relating to the revolutionary status of Greek philosophy in regard to the whole of humanity as well as those relating to the spiritual geography of Europe excluding a number of ethnic-cultural peoples – these reflections have often been met with the accusation of an explicit or implicit Euro-centrism. In his early work on the concept of genesis in Husserl's work, Jacques Derrida posed the question on the certain naivety of Husserl's interpretations in regard to the division between the "spiritual geography" of Europe and the merely empirical unities of India and Asia (cf. Ch. 4.1) – questions that were later replaced with accusations of a "racist logic" in Husserl's later works.[34] Although Derrida credited Husserl for his insistence on articulating a transcendental account of temporality and the development of sense, his analyses on Europe failed to distinguish between a transcendental and an empirical notion of genesis, thus resulting in an unfounded idealization of this particular cultural form. By arguing for the inherent ideality and universality of the philosophical attitude, and at the same time, by locating its origin on the Greek peninsula 700–500 BC, Husserl contradicted himself, Derrida argues, by "reducing the idea of philosophy into a fact"[35]. How could something empirical serve as the platform for a universal idea?

[33] Due to the late publication of Husserl's lectures on ethics – especially those dealing with the problematic of person and state, accompanied by the historical introduction of modern moral philosophy from Hobbes onwards –, the crisis has not either been linked to the general categories of modern social or political philosophy. I am referring here especially to the 1920/24 lecture course on *Einleitung in die Ethik.Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920 und 1924* published as the volume XXXVII of Husserliana.

[34] See Derrida 1987: 112ff.

[35] Derrida 2003: 156.

In his later work *The Other Heading* (1992), Derrida raised this question once more by linking it to the broader question on the historical narratives of modernity. Here, he once again expressed doubt concerning the ambiguous character of Husserl's late philosophy as guided by the idea of transcendental community, for which "Europe would be at once the name and the exemplary figure."[36] By criticizing the general tendency of modern historical thinking to treat Europe as the *telos* of all historical development – a criticism already articulated by Nietzsche – Derrida aimed at illuminating the destructive tendency of what he called *arche-teleological* model of history. "From Hegel to Valéry, from Husserl to Heidegger", Derrida writes,

> [...] this traditional discourse [on Europe] is already a discourse of the modern Western world. [...] It dates from a moment when Europe sees itself on the horizon, that is to say, from its end (the *horizon*, in Greek, is the limit), from the imminence of its end. This old discourse about Europe, a discourse at once exemplary and exemplarist, is already a traditional discourse of modernity.[37]

Thus following Hegel, Derrida concludes that it is an inherent feature of our modern view of history that it has considered all historical developments as arche-teleological (or variations of such developments), that is, as guided by ideas of origin and goal, of *arche* and *telos*. In this regard, Derrida is quite right to situate Husserl within this modernist framework of historical development, searching for what Jean-Francois Lyotard later called the "grand narratives" of history. Husserl's teleological-historical reflections did indeed aim at the broadest possible outlook on historical development – a universal history – however, this teleology could only be articulated on the basis of the present moment, implying the need for its constant rearranging. This is why Husserl argues that instead of a Kantian-Hegelian "novel" (*Roman*), historical teleology could only be understood in terms of an interpretation or even "poetic fiction" (*Dichtung*).[38] It is exactly here that Derrida's interpretation turns out to be unsound: Husserl did not view historical teleology as equivalent to the idea of universal history guided by any form of historical determinism, nor did he consider

[36] Derrida 1992: 33.
[37] Derrida 1992: 28.
[38] HuaXXVII: 47. Cf. Ch. 4.1.

it necessary to define it in terms of an empirical end (what Derrida names as the "imminence of end"). As I will argue in this work, the teleological analysis can according to Husserl only be understood on the basis of the inextricable openness and inexhaustibility of historical development. As a concept of historical thought, teleology can only be articulated as proceeding backwards from the present situation, and it ought to serve the purpose of self-responsibility: it is critical reflection of our own origin and genesis.

Husserl's interpretations on the idea of Europe have also been approached from a more approving perspective. Especially several articles by Klaus Held (1980, 1989a, 1989b, 2002) – which still can be considered as the best introduction to the topic of Europe in Husserl's work – have emphasized the essentially universalistic and non-Eurocentric undertone of Husserl's interpretations. According to one of Held's central theses, Husserl's reflections on the Greek inception of philosophy aimed at a radical interpretation on the "Heraclitean" discovery of the "one world" on the basis of a universal concept of reason.[39] Instead of restricting themselves to the scope of scientific evidence, these reflections pointed towards an essentially equal and pluralistic idea of human rationality, nurturing what Held calls the spirit of democracy. By doing so, Husserl's "return" to Greece was to be understood in terms of an insistence on creating a counter-discourse to the violent and unilateral history of European modernization. While I find Held's interpretation appealing, I also insist that Husserl's own ideal of a self-responsible community cannot be fully appreciated in the context of Greek political philosophy. Instead, we need to read it in relation to the more dynamic concept of intersubjectivity characteristic to the Christian experience delineated by St. Paul.

Besides Held, Husserl's manifold analyses on generativity have been acknowledged particularly in the works of Anthony Steinbock and Bernhard Waldenfels. In my own analysis on the generative dimensions of Husserl's Europe-thinking, I have benefitted especially from Steinbock's rich and detailed account on this problematic in the context of Husserl's phenomenology. In his work *Home and Beyond – Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (1995), Steinbock argues for the necessity of articulating a novel approach to Husserl's transcendental phenomenology of the social world

[39] See e.g. Held 2002.

– an approach or "method" he names as generative phenomenology. Steinbock calls this approach "non-foundational" in the sense that it "describes and participates in geologically and historically developing structures of existence and coexistence, as well as their respective modes of constitution, without reducing those modes of constitution [...] to an egological subjectivity as the foundational account does."[40] Especially in this early work, Steinbock read the dimension of generativity as an essentially divergent approach in relation to the individual-oriented approach to the problem of ownness and otherness in Husserl's published work (especially the analysis of empathy in the fifth section of the *Cartesian Meditations*), resulting in a suggestive analysis on the "axiological asymmetry" of the categories of home and alien. In this regard, both Steinbock and Waldenfels formulate the phenomenological idea of interculturality in terms of a Levinasian idea of responsiveness towards the alien: instead of doing away with the liminal structure of home and alien, phenomenology ought to acknowledge it as a permanent structure of all lifeworlds, as something which serves as the point of departure for all genuinely ethical relations. In this work I acknowledge this asymmetry as the basic point of departure for Husserl's reflections on generativity and interculturality. However, it is my argument that in order to understand and appreciate Husserl's insistence on the "genuine" sense of universality, we need to go beyond the mere idea of responsiveness, and work towards a critical position that could point towards the common foundation of all cultural objectivities in the shared lifeworld.

Despite my insistence on defending Husserl's approach against his critics such as Derrida, I am by no means suggesting an un-critical or fundamentalist reading of his texts. From the perspective of the contemporary situation, we ought to criticize both Husserl's historical interpretation on the pivotal role the Classical period of Greek thinking as well as his remarks on Eskimos, Indians, or Papuans. The evident Euro-

[40] Steinbock 1995: 4. In his later article "Temporality and Point: The Origins and Crisis of Continental Philosophy", Steinbock no longer calls this approach non-foundational (but co-foundational), since he wishes to distance the Husserlian idea of origin-dependency from the non-foundational accounts of post-structuralism and post-modernism (See 1998c: 166). As I will argue in part 4, this division is well justified: Husserl's position ought to be understood as belonging to the modern tradition of philosophy of history. However, through the peculiar *epoché* of historical narrativity, the idea of historical teleology was to be divested of its empirical commitments that delineate the course of history.

centrism of his works, I believe, can partially be understood in terms of self-reflexivity – Husserl was a philosopher *within* the European tradition, which constituted his basic point of departure – though not perhaps completely: his insistence that we, the Europeans, "would never Indianize ourselves"[41] seems both arrogant as well as untrue. Current economic-cultural globalization, which I believe can best be understood in terms of a particular instantiation of universalism – perhaps what Hegel called the "formal universality" of the market-place – merely provides a universal medium of interaction for the exchange of goods and the accumulation of the capital, but it provides no means for the universal mediation between different homeworlds. Instead, we are indeed constantly "exotizing" ourselves in order to create new forms of experience that can be capitalized on through globalization. For this reason, my approach to the problematic of Europe grows out of a general philosophical conviction concerning the indispensability of the universalistic standpoint accompanied by a teleological idea of historical development.

The objectives, methods and structure of this work

This dissertation operates within the framework of Husserlian phenomenology. It provides a *systematic philosophical* interpretation of the idea of Europe in Husserl's phenomenology from the perspective of two particular topics: generativity and historicity. By doing so, the work employs specific methods that are characteristic of philosophical analysis: argumentative and conceptual clarification, textual criticism and hermeneutic interpretation. Although the work includes a substantial amount of exegetical study of primary and secondary sources, it goes beyond this type of study by articulating an argument of its own concerning the historical and political implications of phenomenology – implications that have usually fallen out of the scope of Husserlian phenomenology.

At times, but especially in chapters 1.1 and 1.2 dealing with the idea of crisis, the work employs the resources and methods of conceptual his-

[41] HuaVI: 320.

tory – however, these historical insights are entertained primarily from the overall systematic perspective of my work. Especially in the third part of the work, I employ the methods of hermeneutical and philological critique of Ancient sources in order to supplement Husserl's somewhat undefined and inadvertent remarks on Greek philosophy. Besides a few exceptions – most importantly, the 1919/20 lecture course *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (the manuscript F I 40–) and the 1923 manuscript "Wert des Lebens, Wert der Welt, Sittlichkeit (Tugend) und Glückseligkeit" – I remain within the standard edition of Husserl's collected works (*Husserliana*, published by Martinus Nijhoff/Kluwer/Springer). (On secondary literature, see above). In regards to Ancient texts, I have employed the sixth edition of Diels & Kranz's *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechisch und Deutsch* (for pre-Socratics); and for the translations of Plato and Aristotle, I have consulted the bilingual Cambridge-Harvard editions of *Plato in Twelve Volumes* and the Oxford edition of Aristotle's writings. At certain occasions I have diverged from these translations. In chapter 4.3, a similar critique is employed in relation to the Pauline letters – for the original Greek, I have employed the Nestle–Aland edition of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*, and instead of the King James edition, I have employed the more literal translation of *The Holy Bible: International Standard Version* by the ISV Committee.

The work is divided into four parts. **In the first part of the work**, I begin by illuminating the idea of *crisis* as the fundamental point of departure for Husserl's reflections on Europe. I will show that the crisis was by no means an original topic of the time, but it was linked to a series of presuppositions concerning the political and historical implications of modern philosophy. Husserl did not invent this notion, but he aimed at articulating some of its most fundamental presuppositions anew. I will argue that in order to understand the generative and historical implications of Husserl's Europe-thinking, we need to understand it against the background of the modern ideas of political community (i.e. the body politic) and historical teleology. Moreover, it is necessary to situate Husserl's thought in the context of early twentieth-century crisis-thinking, which endowed this notion with a novel sense of apocalyptic inevitability. I will show that Husserl's reflections on this notion extended well beyond the domain of scientific rationality (e.g. the problems of psychologism and

historicism). The crisis announced itself, for instance, in the cultural relativism of his time. However, by showing how the possibility of crisis was actually embedded in the very structure of rationality itself, I will locate the possibility of articulating this notion as a transcendental-phenomenological category. This transition enables us to account for the seeming inconsistency in Husserl's crisis-thinking, the fact that he treats the idea of crisis as something necessary and inevitable, yet something that needs to be overcome "once and for all".

The second part of the work discusses the basic ideas and concepts of generativity and communality in Husserl's work. By focusing on the idea of Husserl's methodological transition from static to genetic phenomenology, I will show how Husserl was able to open up the domains of temporality and historicity as transcendental-phenomenological categories. By doing so, I elucidate the fundamental transition in Husserl's account of the transcendental subjectivity in contrast to Kantian concept of transcendentality, a transition which provides us with a notion of the transcendental ego as necessarily temporal and singular. Through the (Leibnizian) concept of monad, I argue, Husserl was able to account for both of these aspects, but also for the inherent intersubjectivity of the transcendental ego. This provides us with the basic approach to the Husserlian "social ontology", which should not be understood as a mere theory of social interaction or co-operation nor as a hermeneutic approach to the structures and discourses of the political community. Instead, Husserl's understanding of sociality penetrated into the very core of the constitution of objective world and its specific normative (e.g. cultural, historical) demarcations through reciprocal social acts. Husserl's somewhat ambiguous concept of the lifeworld – the lifeworld as a universal correlate of intersubjectivity as well as its historical and cultural specifications in the plural – ought to be understood on the basis of this normative demarcation: lifeworld is the fundamental transcendental correlate of experience, but it is constantly specified and singularized through cultural and spiritual accomplishments. Husserl's account of the homeworld, I show, ought to be likewise understood on the basis of this specification not as an alternative domain of purely spiritual geography but as the territorial demarcation of the limits of familiarity. Lastly, I will discuss Husserl's conceptual distinction between community and culture. It is my argument that this

distinction is crucial not only for the uniqueness of Husserl's position to the Hegelian idea of objective spirit, but in regard to the specific modes of temporality characteristic to these domains. Through his idea of "we-subjectivity" or the "personalities of a higher order", Husserl was able to account for the specific modes of co-operation and temporal habituation that are characteristic to intersubjective associations – most importantly, to that specific idea of association which received its inception through Greek philosophy.

This idea of a specific interpersonal co-operation characteristic to the philosophical community forms the key theme of **the third part of this work**. In this part, I will provide a reading of Husserl's account on Greek philosophy from the viewpoints of generativity and historicity. It is my argument that this account is best understood as the emergence of a specific idea of universalism, articulating itself in the novel understanding of communal and political co-operation as well as a unique horizon of production. Philosophy, besides evolving in a novel attitude of the individual – the theoretical – was itself founded on a specific generative transformation, which had its foundation in the specific relativization of the Greek city-states. Instead of accepting the relativities of different mythical world-views (as in the case of skepticism), philosophy aimed at discovering their common foundation in the idea of a shared world. Thus philosophy, I argue, appeared as a twofold deconstruction of limits: it aimed at overcoming the seemingly natural territoriality of particular homeworlds, but it was also willing to transcend the teleological limits of the pre-philosophical attitude. This is what Husserl implied with his notion of "infinite task": philosophy articulates itself in relation to cultural accomplishments that are only partially attainable in concrete action. Philosophy has its horizon in infinity. Lastly, I will discuss this transition from the viewpoint of the best-known instantiation of this universal attitude: political universalism. On the basis of Husserl's reflections, I will show how the theoretical motive of *epoché* was transferred into the sphere of political community, and what implications did this transfer have from the perspective of political institutions. While the motive of cosmopolitanism is often regarded as a later theme of Hellenistic or Christian political philosophy, I will argue for its latent signification in the political idealism of the Classical period, especially that of Plato. However, by showing how this idealism was con-

strained by the specific modes of governance characteristic to Greek political thought, I argue that Husserl's idea of perpetual renewal cannot be ultimately acknowledged within this framework.

For this reason, in the **fourth part of the work**, I will turn my attention to the generative conditions of this perpetual renewal in the ideas of historical teleology and communality. By offering a reading on the absolute and relative ideals within the framework of Husserl's ethics, I will articulate the possibility of a phenomenological account of historical teleology and progress. These notions, I argue, ought to be understood as critical devices of phenomenological reflection that are founded on the specific historical *epoché* that concerns all particular historical narratives. In other words, what we mean by "progress in history" can only be understood as a category of practical reason or will that developed on the basis of the present moment, in relation to the infinitely open horizon of generative development. This idea has crucial implications in regard to the Husserlian account of philosophy. It is my conviction that if we take Husserl's generative reflections to their utmost limits, we are able to articulate a concept of philosophical reflection, which – though it involves a necessary relation to the philosophizing individual and her capacities of self-reflection – *uncovers its genuine sense only as a communal and historical undertaking*. In other words, if we accept the necessary relation of philosophy and generativity, we are able to arrive at a notion of philosophical reflection that carries within itself a relation to the preceding and subsequent community of philosophers: science can only be thought of as a communal and intergenerational activity. On the basis of these reflections, I will articulate what I consider to be the latent "political phenomenology" of Husserl's body of work. By taking my point of departure from his idea of social ethics as a dynamic-genetic notion, I hope to show that the political potential of phenomenology resides in a novel understanding of political idealism as a form of dynamic utopianism, the twofold creation and renewal of the normative ideals of humanity on the basis of historical teleology. Lastly, I will discuss this idea in connection to the specific mode of subjectivity and communality implied within it. By taking my point of departure from one of Husserl's most ambiguous notions – the community of love (*Liebesgemeinschaft*) – I argue that it was exactly with the help of the notion of love that Husserl articulated the most radical solution to the

problematic of ethical communality and universalism. By discussing this topic on the basis of a specific idea of apolitical communality – articulated in the letters of St. Paul – I argue in which sense the universalistic stance necessary involves a specific critique of the category of identity, which is fundamentally tied to the constitution of home and alien. This reading of the Pauline heritage, motivated especially from the interpretations of Jacob Taubes and Alan Badiou, provides us with a novel understanding of the phenomenological subject as originally "intertwined" with others; moreover, it shows how the constitution of cultural identities necessarily entails the concealment of this intertwining.

Secondary literature

As I already pointed out, the topic of Europe does not really constitute a unified discussion in the existing Husserl-scholarship. Besides the critical approaches of Derrida, Paul de Man, and Enrique Dussel – to name but a few – Husserl's reflections on Europe have been considered in a more positive light in the works of Held, Buckley, Karl Schuhmann and Elisabeth Ströker. Of the more recent publications, Rodolphe Gasché's *Europe, or the Infinite Task: a Study of a Philosophical Concept* (2009) provides a detailed reading of Husserl's idea of philosophical universality, although this analysis remains for the most part on the level of scientific rationality, and does not touch upon the cultural or generative aspects of this phenomenon.[42]

All in all, since most of the Husserl-scholarship has concentrated on the problems of individual consciousness, subjectivity and scientific evidence, the topics of sociality, generativity and historicity have remained somewhat secondary topics. Moreover, the absence of these topics in Husserl's published works have spurred a wide variety of criticisms concern-

[42] As regards to the general problematic of Europe within the phenomenological tradition, my interpretation has benefitted from the works of such philosophers as Étienne Balibar, Remi Brague, Fred Dallmayr, Françoise Dastur, Dennis Guénoun, Jean-Luc Nancy and Jan Patočka. Most importantly, the arguments presented in this work have been motivated by the highly original and suggestive interpretations of Husserl's genetic phenomenology and the problematic of Europe by Jacques Derrida. Despite the originality of these interpretations, I believe Derrida's critical reactions towards Husserl are often based on careless readings of his texts, resulting in what I consider as partially unfounded accusations on Husserl's Euro-centrism (cf. Ch. 4.1).

ing the negligence of phenomenology in regard to the social and political sphere – criticisms that have significantly shaped the development of post-Husserlian phenomenology and Continental philosophy in general. Following Adorno's analysis on the fundamental idealistic undertone of Husserl, philosophers such as Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas have all at some point situated their projects in a critical relation towards Husserlian phenomenology, expressing their discontent towards the asocial, apolitical, and even atemporal aspects of this undertaking.

However, it was already some of Husserl's best known students – Edith Stein, Gerda Walther, Alfred Schütz and Leo Strauss – who employed the phenomenological method in order to discuss and define the phenomena of the social and political sphere. From Stein's reflections on the problematic of state and civil society to Schütz's various analyses in the constitution of the social world (what he called "descriptive sociology"), phenomenology was seen as a fruitful method for the understanding of different social phenomena. However, even these approaches were often defined in a critical relation to Husserl's individualistic approach – Schütz, for instance, saw it necessary to accompany Husserl's analyses with what he called the "constitutive analysis of the natural attitude"[43], that is, a study of social relations as they appear within the natural attitude. Since the publication of Husserl's vast manuscripts on the topic of intersubjectivity – especially those complementing the analysis of empathy in the *Cartesian Meditations* – many commentators have acknowledged the novel potentiality of Husserlian phenomenology with regard to the topic of sociality. Commentators such as Dan Zahavi, Bernhard Waldenfels, James G. Hart, Natalie Depraz, Michael Theunissen, and Janet Donahoe and have provided detailed accounts on the problematic of intersubjectivity and social ontology in the framework of Husserl's phenomenology. Following Waldenfels' analyses on cultural alienness as well as the idea of "cultural phenomenology" (*Kulturphänomenologie*) in the writings of Ernst Wolfgang Orth, several commentators have approached the topics of interculturality from the perspective of Husserl's phenomenology.[44]

[43] Schütz 1967: 44.

[44] With regard to these topics, I have benefitted especially from the openings articulated by Hart's *The Person and the Common Life: Studies in a Husserlian Social Ethics* (1992), Zahavi's works on intersubjectivity (2001) as well as the diligent readings of Ichiro Yamaguchi in

In regards to the topic of historicity, Husserl's later works have spurred a wide variety of analyses dealing with the relation between phenomenology and historical reflection. Already in the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the historical-critical approach of Husserl's late philosophy was acknowledged as a novel articulation on the general character of the phenomenological method.[45] Despite the immensely pivotal role of corporeality, perceptual awareness and subjectivity in Merlau-Ponty's own works, I believe his insights on the historical and political aspects of phenomenology are still of high relevance – insights that were articulated, for instance, in his attempts to reconcile phenomenology with the Marxist tradition.[46] This approach was also entertained by Tran Duc Thao in his *Phenomenology and Dialectical Materialism* (*Phénoménologie et matérialisme dialectique*, 1951) whose second part ("The Dialectic of Real Movement") was one of the first instantiations of the teleological-historical method outside Husserl's own body of work. In the early Husserl-reception, the problematic of history was likewise discussed by Paul Ricoeur in his 1949 article "Husserl et le sens de l'histoire" ("Husserl and the Sense of History"), which approached this topic also in regard to the problematic of Europe. Although Ricoeur's approach was highly original and insightful, some of his imprecise translations gave way to a series of misinterpretations concerning Husserl's definition of Europe (see Ch. 4.1). In this work, I have benefitted especially from David Carr's insightful interpretations concerning the historical dimensions of phenomenology – especially those concerning the narrative character of historicity and its relation to Hegelian dialectics – in *Phenomenology and the Problem of History* (1974) and *Time, Narrative and History* (1991).[47]

As regards to the explicitly political approaches to Husserl's phenomenology, this work employs especially the insights of Karl Schuhmann's *Husserls Staatsphilosophie* (1988). Besides engaging in a discussion with Schumann's reading of the problematic of state in Husserl, I have also capitalized on his interpretation of Husserl's idea of "community of love"

his *Passive Synthesis und Intersubjektivität bei Edmund Husserl* (1982). On the problematic of interculturality, see Mohanty 2001; Carr & Zhang 2004; Welton 2000: 306ff.

[45] Merleau-Ponty 2002: xx.

[46] Merleau-Ponty 1973.

[47] In his collection of essays *Interpreting Husserl: Critical and Comparative Studies* (1987), Carr provides also a suggestive reading on the problematic of intersubjectivity, especially the idea of "personalities of a higher order".

(*Liebesgemeinschaft*). Other central contributions in this topic have been articulated by Hart (1992a), Held (2007), Natalie Depraz (1995), John Drummond (2000), and Andrzej Gniazdowski (2004).

Regarding the problematic of crisis, or the more specific "European crisis", I have relied on two sets of sources. First of all, I have articulated my own position in regard to a variety of authors discussing the idea of crisis in Husserl's own works. Besides the interpretations given by authors such as Carr, Tom Rockmore and Dermot Moran, perhaps the most helpful work in this regard has been Philip J. Buckley's *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (1992).[48] Secondly, in my interpretation concerning the philosophical and intellectual background of Husserl's crisis-thinking, I have taken advantage of a substantial amount of literature relating to this thematic. Besides my readings of the original authors – Hobbes, Rousseau, Hegel, Schmitt, Spengler – one of the most important sources in this regard has been the work of the German philosopher and conceptual historian Reinhart Koselleck, whose 1959 work *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (*Kritik und Krise*: *Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt*) served as one of the key points of departure for my approach to the topic of modernity and its crisis. In the first part of the work, I have also benefitted of Koselleck's numerous articles concerning the conceptual history of the notion of crisis as well as the birth of modern philosophical history in general.[49]

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[48] In his work, Buckley provides a detailed reading of Husserl's concept of crisis especially in regard to the problematic of scientific rationality and the loss of intuitive evidence implied within it; at the same time, he manages to touch upon some of the most intriguing topics concerning the communal and cultural dimensions of Husserl's phenomenology.

[49] Other important sources in this regard have been Nelly Tsouyopoulos' entry (1971) on the concept of crisis in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* as well as Gerhard Masur's "Crisis in History" in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Selected Study of Pivotal Ideas*. In my attempt to provide the notion of crisis with a phenomenological interpretation, I have benefitted from a number of philosophers dealing with the problematic of modernity within the Continental tradition: Hannah Arendt, Charles Bambach, Hans Blumenberg, Ágnes Heller, Frederic Jameson, Claude Lefort and Leo Strauss, to name a few. Especially Strauss' work on the genesis of natural law in early modernity in *Natural Right and History* (1953) as well as Lefort's collections *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism* (1986) and *Democracy and Political Theory* (1989) have provided important insights on the legitimacy-crisis of modern political philosophy.

On a more general level, this work aims at reinstituting the philosophical sense of the concept of Europe not in order to repeat the modern conviction of its unwavering universality but for the purpose of responding to the general demise of universalism that we are witnessing through the growing crisis of intercultural co-operation, transnational agreements, and other global political institutions. This is not to say, however, that we ought to conceive Europe as the sole framework for the realization of the universal reason, nor should we consider it as the indispensable title for future forms of universalism. We should, I believe, treat the history of European universalism primarily as a lesson to be learned – a lesson, which points towards the idea of a radical responsiveness towards the alien but which also accounts for the unjust and unilateral history of European expansionism.

This lesson entails that we approach Europe, once again, not as a tradition to be defended but as a question to be asked.

—I—

Phenomenology and the Crisis of European Modernity

> PHILOSOPHICAL PATHOLOGY. An absolute drive toward perfection and completeness is an illness, as soon as it shows itself to be destructive and averse toward the imperfect, the incomplete. – Novalis: *Das allegemeine Brouillon,* (1993 [1798], fr. 32)

In his elusive essay "What is Enlightenment?" Michel Foucault puts forward a series of questions concerning the character of the modern age. Taking his point of departure from a critical encounter with Kant's 1784 essay bearing the same name, Foucault asks whether instead of the traditional understanding of modernity as a historical epoch – defined through a set of cultural accomplishments, values, or a historical style – we ought to characterize it in terms of an *attitude*. "By attitude", Foucault writes,

> I mean a mode of relating to contemporary reality; a voluntary choice made by certain people; in the end, a way of thinking and feeling; a way, too, of acting and behaving that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task. A bit, no doubt, like what the Greeks called an *ethos*. And consequently, rather than seeking to distinguish the "modern era" from the "premodern" or "postmodern", I think it would be more useful to try to find out how the attitude of modernity, ever since its formation, has found itself struggling with attitudes of "counter-modernity".[1]

Thus, what Foucault recalls here is the old Hegelian thought according to which modernity is that epoch which is not destroyed by its negative character but which can sustain this negativity as a fundamental

[1] Foucault 1984: 39.

constituent of its essence.[2] Why is this? Because as the Latin *modernus* already suggest, this period implies a special relation to the "just now" (Lat. *modo*).[3] Modernity is an epoch that resists the overarching authority of the past for the sake of the present moment; it understands that one is free not in spontaneity but in relation to one's historical and cultural presuppositions. Fixing modernity into a particular historical "heritage" would mean that we lose sight of what is most essential to this notion: the opposition to traditionality as such. As Foucault continues:

> Modernity is often characterized in terms of consciousness of the discontinuity of time: a break with tradition, a feeling of novelty, of vertigo in the face of the passing moment [...] Modernity is distinct from fashion, which does no more than call into question the course of time; modernity is the attitude that makes it possible to grasp the 'heroic' aspect of the present moment. Modernity is not a phenomenon of sensitivity to the fleeting present; it is the will to "heroize" the present.[4]

As a result of this tendency, it is one of the fundamental traits of the modern age to see the present moment as revolutionary, as something which represents the very climax of history. For the modern age, every historical event is a crucial turning-point; every presence is a time of upheaval in which the future course of history is being decided once and for all. Here, it is of course easy to agree with Foucault that this logic of constant culmination – the "heroization of the present" – cannot obviously be anything but unjustified: genuine historical revolutions are rare and can their significance can be acknowledged only in retrospect. Depending on the development of the global system, the year 2001 may well turn out to be more important for the future history writing than, for instance, the col-

[2] I am referring here especially to the characterization in the *Philosophy of Right* (§358) of German nations as "the extreme of absolute negativity" (*erfaßt der in sich zurückgedrängte Geist in dem Extreme seiner absoluten Negativität*), in which "spirit finds the infinite and yet positive nature of its own inner being, the principle of unity of the divine and the human" (*die unendliche Positivität dieses seines Innern, das Prinzip der Einheit der göttlichen und menschlichen Natur*) GW 14.1: 280–281.

[3] The term "modern" itself dates back to the well-known quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns that erupted in the context of *Académie française* in the late 17th century. Here, the fundamental question was whether we should understand the past primarily as a source of inspiration and the target of imitation – or, whether the past represents something that suppresses us, something that hinders us from reacting to the demands of the present moment.

[4] Foucault 1984: 39.

lapse of the iron curtain in the late 1980s – or they both may be surpassed by the year of the Maastricht Treaty (1992). This is something that we cannot judge. As we have observed with the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the succeeding implementation of neo-liberal policies in the 1980s – which served as a catalyst for the unending series of financial crises since the beginning of 1990s – some of the most significant revolutions of our time take place rather unobserved, as the result of seemingly minor or irrelevant occurrences. Thus, as Foucault has put it elsewhere, this *logic of constant crisis* is something whose tempting spell we should resist. What we need is a more modest view of ourselves and of our time, humbleness in front of history.[5]

Still, in order to resist this tendency of overemphasizing the present, we should perhaps come to grips with it. For if the crisis-consciousness truly is a modern phenomenon, we must ask whether there is something in the very nature of modernity itself that allows crises to come about, something that constantly produces crises rather than just serves as their stage. For if modernity truly is, as Marx put it in connection to the aftermath of French Revolution, an age of "permanent revolution"[6], then what kind of concepts of permanence and identity must we anticipate? What kind of ideas of temporality and change does this idea presuppose in order to come about?

Husserl, too, was a philosopher for whom the present moment carried a particularly important significance. Already in his early works Husserl defined phenomenology as a philosophical attitude, which seeks to examine all constitution of meaning with regard to its appearance in the present moment (*Gegenwart*), more precisely, in its "bodily" (*leibhaft*) or "living" (*lebendig*) clarity.[7] This was not to say that our entire experience

[5] Foucault 1989: 251. On Foucault's use of "crisis", see Sluga 1993: 74. In his *Crossroads in the Labyrinth*, Cornelius Castoriadis sees crises not just as transitional phases or historical stages in the development of the modern science, but as its "permanent state" (1984: xiv). See also Bambach 1995: 44–45.

[6] This idea of "permanent revolution" originates from Marx's essay *The Holy Family* (1844) where he discusses Napoleon's "twofold" struggle with and against the bourgeoisie society. This notion became a highly important concept for both the German revisionists as well as the Russian communists. See Voegelin 1999: 15.

[7] On "bodily" presence, see HuaXXIX: 434. The term "living presence" (*lebendige Gegenwart*) appears mostly in Husserl's manuscripts, where it is linked to the temporal or "flowing" (*strömend*) character of presense. See HuaI: 161; HuaXI: 278; HuaMatVIII: 113, passim.

would be characterized by the full givenness of things; rather, we ought to acknowledge this presence as the demarcation of the limits of legitimate knowledge. The objects we perceive or the things we contemplate are of course more than those aspects that are intuited at a given moment (what Husserl sometimes calls *Präsenz* or *Urpräsenz*, "primal presence"). As Husserl later clarified in his lectures on time-consciousness, the present itself was to be understood in terms of width and density: it reaches out to the horizons of past and future through "retentional" and "protentional" awareness. However, it is only this intuitive givenness in the present which functions as the ultimate point of reference for all meaning and validity.

In Husserl's later writings, however, this presence seemed to entail even a greater magnitude. Especially in his last major work *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, the present moment was now introduced as the necessary point of departure for the novel way of arriving at the fundamental problems of phenomenology, that of "teleological-historical reflection".[8] Whereas most of Husserl's earlier works were dominated by the narration of the first person singular ("Philosophy [...] is the philosophizer's quite personal affair"[9], as Husserl put it in the *Cartesian Meditations*) it seems that especially in the context of *Crisis*-work, the subject of philosophical reflection was to be conceived now in terms of the first person plural – "we, humans of the present" (*Wir Menschen der Gegenwart*), "we, philosophers of the present" (*wir Philosophen dieser Gegenwart*), or "contemporary philosophers" (*heutige Philosophen*).[10] Respectively, the foundation of philosophical questioning was now defined with terms such as "the actual state of the present" (*die faktische Gegenwartslage*) and "our present situation" (*unsere Gegenwartssituation*)[11] referring to the inextricably cultural and communal aspects of this presence. Here, the present was no longer understood in terms of immediate presence for consciousness, but in terms of a broader horizon of interests, including the various historical "presuppositions" (*Voraussetzungen*) belonging to the given situation.

[8] On the use of this term, see the editor's comments in HuaVI: xiii; Cf. HuaVI: 435.
[9] HuaI: 44.
[10] HuaVI: 12, 15, 72.
[11] HuaVI: 8, 16, 196.

This focus on the present moment was of course implied by the very topic of the work itself, the "crisis" (*Krisis*) of the European sciences. By the year 1934, as Husserl began to prepare his first texts that carried this notion in their title, the German intellectual scene had witnessed a quick emergence of crisis-literature whose topics extended from the particular cultural, political and economic crises to the overarching degradation of the whole of Western world. The "crisis" was by no means an originary topic: since the early 1920s, the economic crisis of the post-war Germany had paved the way for political extremists who aimed at capitalizing the political sense of the crisis by introducing exceptional measures of action. The Weimar Republic itself reached its end through the so-called *Gleichschaltung* ("coordination") of the early 1933, which basically institutionalized the crisis by introducing a permanent state of exception over the constitutional law. Thus, it seems that there was no shortage of crisis-consciousness, which called for a transformation on the present state of affairs: for politicians as well as for philosophers, *it was an imperative to act*. What was perhaps lacking was a more thorough consideration concerning the origins of these crises. Although Husserl, too, maintained that the "task of self-reflection grows out of the breakdown-situation of our time"[12], this insight did not prevent him from warning against the "spell" (*Bann*) of the present times.[13] Despite its compelling character, the very discourse on crisis *as the focusing of attention to the present moment* was as much a hindrance as it was the path to a genuine philosophical reflection.

There are still good reasons, I believe, to designate Husserl's later reflections in terms of a *philosophy of presence*. This presence, however, was no longer the affair of a singular subject and her givenness, but it was understood as the essentially intersubjective and historical framework of meaning and sense. A serious analysis of this domain was already anticipated with the emerging analyses on the concept of lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) since the late 1910s – however, it was only in his later works that Husserl fully appreciated the generative dimensions of this concept, i.e. the cultural, historical and social processes of meaning-sedimentation implied in it. In order to accomplish this, Husserl introduced a novel idea of histori-

[12] "[…] diejenige Aufgabe der Selbstbesinnung auf uns nehmen, welche aus der Zusammenbruchs-Situation unserer Zeit […] erwachsen ist." HuaVI: 59.
[13] HuaVI: 58.

cal critique (the "teleological-historical reflection"), proceeding through a "questioning-back" (*rückfragen*), which unfolds the essential dependency of the present moment from the past.

Thus Europe, as it constituted the basic historical, social, and also the political framework for this questioning, was to be conceived not only as a geographical or geopolitical region but as a *historically sedimented tradition of meaning*. Its crisis could not be overcome by putting the present on pedestal; instead, this crisis could only be understood in terms of a historical movement, consisting in a series of ill-founded ideas, meanings, values, and practices. The crisis was, to use the expression of Husserl's Vienna Lecture, to be "uprooted" (*entwurzeln*) in its essential core.[14]

But what really are crises? The frequent use of the word "crisis" in the contemporary debate may often lead us to forget that its modern use results actually from a shift of meaning. The word crisis derives from the Greek verb *krinō* which in the context of classical period meant the making of a separation, distinction, decision or choice. (Correspondingly, the medial form *krinomai* denoted judging or disputing, though not in a particularly violent sense). One of the most common contexts of use was the tribunal that aimed at making a *krisis* concerning the subject matter: the court sessions were pre-pared by a preliminary hearing (*anakrisis*) conducted by a public officer, finally leading to a voting between the options of favorable (*prokrisis*) and unfavorable (*konkrisis*) decision.[15] The sense of decision was also present in Herodotus' *Histories*, in which the word "crisis" was attached to the four pivotal battles of the Persian wars.[16] All in all, the classical use of the word referred to a certain idea of *active choice* – something that one is forced to make. Crises do not merely happen, but they are conducted or performed in one way or another. In *Politics*, for instance, Aristotle linked this sense intimately to the establishing of a political order: "Justice belongs to the *polis*; for justice, which is the determination or decision (*krisis*) of what is just, is an ordering of the political association".[17] Here the "crisis" was the decision that creates order and establishes the possibility of good life in general.

[14] HuaVI: 317.
[15] Sealey 1994: 109.
[16] See esp. Herodotus, *Hist.* VIII.87.
[17] Aristotle, *Pol*.I.2 1253a.

However, already in the fifth century BC the word *krisis* took up another direction that was somewhat opposite to the aforementioned sense. Especially in the medical writings gathered in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, "crisis" came to dnote a "decision" on a medical condition, that is, both the turning-point of a disease as well as the doctor's judgment about it.[18] Galen's (129–200) systematization of Hippocratean crisis-theory and its differentiation between acute and chronic crises was highly influential until the late Middle Ages; to Latin, the word *crisis* was adopted primarily in this medical sense and it is still an important part of medical terminology ("epicrisis", "hemolytic crisis" etc.). According to this account, the crisis was linked to the critical days which either trigger off the process of recovery in the patient, or, in turn, result in the deepening of the medical condition. In its ultimate form, the crisis was a decision between life and death, which must lead either to the renewal of the organism or to its extinction. This crisis, however, was not primarily a matter of active choice. On the contrary, the subject of the crisis was now projected as essentially powerless and *passive*. (It is particularly this sense that forms the basis for the modern understanding of the word, for we usually speak of the subjects of crises as passive entities – the global economy, for instance, does not actively drive itself into crisis, but is drifted or descended into it.)

Alongside with the active and passive conceptions of crisis, we might still list one important meaning of the word. This is the context of Christian theology and its idea of Last Judgment (*krisis*) or the Day of Judgment. Even though this idea of crisis as an "act of justice" dates from the legal context of theGreeks and can be found in all Abrahamic religions, it is not primarily an act that would have taken place in worldly time. It is rather a "cosmic" event that guides history as a whole, guaranteeing the possibility of salvation as well as the rightness of the world ("But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment (*en hēmera kriseōs*)"[19]). Being a Christian means to live in the waiting of this judgment which makes it actually an already ongoing process: the crisis takes place constantly at the level of one's conscience. As Reinhart Koselleck has pointed out, until the sixteenth century the history of Christianity was indeed the waiting of the End of the World – and

[18] Koselleck 2006: 360.
[19] Matt. 12:36

the continual deferment of this End.[20] This teleology, while it guaranteed the essentially just character of world history, could not really point towards a genuine resolution within historical time. There was no choice between death and renewal; both of them coalesced at the ultimate bound of time, the *eschaton* of history.

This eschatological sense of the crisis is particularly important from a philosophical-historical point of view, for it links the notion of crisis to a specific temporal structure. For the late 18th and early 19th century philosophers of history, crisis was not taken as a simple descriptive category, but it implied a deeper *prophetical* connotation pointing towards the fulfillment of history. At the same time, crisis was divested of its sense as the ultimate end of history, and was not conceived in relation to significant historical transitions, for instance, the French Revolution. This tendency, which begins with Rousseau, reached its peak in Hegel, Marx and Comte who all emphasized the pivotal role of radical breaks as the driving forces of history.[21] Crises were not mere sporadic diseases, but they were interpreted in connection to wider historical narratives – for instance, as in the case of Marxist tradition proclaiming the self-destructive character of capitalism due to its increasingly vigorous crises.

As a result of this development, the notion of crisis itself was endowed with its multifaceted contemporary sense during the 18th and 19th centuries. The "crisis" was used to describe a vast variety of ideas, all of which are not easily reconciled with each other. During this period the notion of crisis gained strong foothold in the frameworks of political and social theory, economy and theology; correspondingly, it became a dominant theme in different disciplines such as anthropology, ethnology and psychology.[22] From the 18th century onwards, the philosophical-historical prognoses employed the notion of crisis in order to describe as much the moments of deepest desperation and pessimism as well as the boldness that is involved in the attempts of establishing a new order. In the framework of German philosophy, the notion of crisis employed a central position especially between the years of 1890 and 1933, during which it may be said to have transformed from a mere diagnostic concept into a perma-

[20] Koselleck 1983: 11.
[21] Löwith 1949: 2. See Ch. 1.2.
[22] Koselleck 2006: 358.

nent military-political condition. More importantly, instead of denoting a mere point of transition in the course of history, crisis seemed to refer to a more devastating break in the European-Occidental tradition – one that implicated the possibility of a permanent defeat or even complete decline.

In this section I want to argue that not only does this conceptual background carry a lot of weight in relation to the modern theories of crises, but that it is particularly crucial for Husserl's reflections on Europe. It will be the guiding presupposition of this work that these reflections took their starting-point from a *recognition of crisis* – from the discovery of a historical breakdown-situation, which seemed to drill down to the very fundaments of cultural self-understanding. Husserl, however, did not entertain this popular discourse merely in order to argue for the imminent demise of Europe. Instead, these reflections enabled him to articulate phenomenology with respect to a wholly new domain – the domain of culture, social and political ontology, and historical teleology. As Anthony Steinbock argues, the problematic of *generative phenomenology* – i.e. the investigation of intergenerational forms of co-existence and sedimentation of meaning – "did not arise willy-nilly, as just one phenomenological matter among others. It grew as an historical response to a cultural crisis in a broad sense, not merely a crisis of reason and science, but ultimately of an ethical community."[23] As a result of this confrontation, Husserl found himself struggling with the fundamental problems and presuppositions of modern thought: questions of the direction and progress of history, the possibility of philosophical thinking to direct the course of humanity at large and perhaps most importantly, the possibility of rational culture. Thus, in order to appreciate the uniqueness of the cultural-critical aspect of Husserl's phenomenology, I believe it is crucial that we acknowledge this background.

Within the framework of this dissertation, it is not necessary to provide a detailed idea- or conceptual-historical discussion on the genesis of the European crisis. What I would like to do in this chapter, however, is to capture some of its essential features that I see as crucial with regard to Husserl's reflections on Europe. The notion of crisis attached to several

[23] Steinbock 1995: 260.

presuppositions and conceptual frameworks, which I will discuss in the following part.

First, I will discuss the question concerning *the personification of cultures and communities* in chapter 1.1. Even though Husserl's phenomenology was defined by its first-person orientation, it was not limited merely to the problems of individual consciousness or life. Especially from the 1920s onwards, Husserl saw that phenomenology should be able to confront questions concerning the social realm: the problems of intersubjectivity and interpersonal communication, science as a specific form of communal co-operation, and the ethical ideal of community. Instead of mere derivative phenomena of the individual (consciousness), Husserl begun to discuss communities with such concepts as *Bewusstsein*, *Personalität*, and *Subjekt*, which all referred to the distinct, though not completely independent character of communities. It is my conviction that in order to understand the implications of Husserl's crisis-thinking, it is necessary to situate it not only in regard to the tradition of German idealism promoting the idea of communities as "spiritual" notions, but even the longer tradition of "body politic" (Lat. *corpus politicus*): the definition of communities (particularly political communities) as analogical to individual persons. As I will argue, Husserl's discourse on the crisis of modern Europe was not restricted merely to the sphere of scientific rationality, but this discourse was entertained in order to tackle its wider connotations in the political thinking of modernity, most importantly, *the loss of natural human sociality* implied by modern physicalist rationality.

Secondly, I will focus on the background of the crisis in the idea of *history as a teleological process* in chapter 1.2. Since the eighteenth century the notion of crisis has closely linked to the idea of historical decision or break: a crisis is an event that marks a radical turning-point in the course of history. Especially since Kant and Hegel, we have been accustomed to speak of this general form of historical development in terms of a *teleological* structure – i.e. determined by the categories of origin and end – which finds its ultimate *completion* in a particular ideal form. As I will show, although Hegel's relation to the "end of history" was fundamentally ambiguous, he nevertheless maintained that the development of spirit must correspond to a particular empirical form, which brings the dialectics of history to its end. It is my argument that Husserl's reflections on crisis

capitalized on this idea in the sense that he aimed at interpreting the crisis on the basis of a teleological concept of historical development, which can be discovered by the phenomenological "questioning-back". By insisting on the inextricably ideal character of this teleology, Husserl radically challenged the progressive and deterministic implications of the modern teleological view of history – an idea which serves as the point of departure for my thesis on the peculiar "historical epoché" of Husserl (cf. Ch. 4.1).

In chapter 1.3 I will focus on the more imminent influences of Husserl's crisis-thinking, the philosophical and intellectual situation of the early twentieth century. As I will show, it was especially the novel emphasis on the organic connotations of crisis that served as the point of departure for Husserl's broadened critiques of naturalism and historicism in regard to the mere individual-oriented and scientific interpretations of these notions. Through the post-WWI debate, Husserl was inclined to react to a growing debate concerning the crisis of the "European" rationality that manifested itself in the novel idea of cultural relativism and the critique of progress. Instead of a historical transition, the crisis pointed towards a new idea of historical decline – expressed in the works of Nietzsche and Spengler – that could no longer hold on to the essentially voluntarist and open character of historical development. Instead, the crisis was now used to denote the beginning of an irreversible end. It is my argument that in order to understand the essentially active and voluntarist connotations of Husserl's crisis-thinking, it is necessary to attach it to the idea of political decisionism that played a part in the crisis-debate of the early twentieth-century. Instead of pointing towards a political state of exception, Husserl aimed at articulating this decisionism in the context of generative and historical reflection.

Lastly, in chapter 1.4 I will start the discussion on the emergence and character of the topic of crisis in Husserl's phenomenology. Although Husserl expressed the need to formulate the project of phenomenology in regard to the domain of culture already at the beginning of the 1910s, it was not until the 1920s that Husserl begun to understand this need as depending on a novel articulation of the division between theoretical and practical reason. As I will show, Husserl no longer treated the philosophical problems of naturalism and historicism as merely something which concern the rational capacities of the individual subject; instead, their

scope had now broadened to include also the domains of culture and intersubjective co-operation. As I will show, Husserl's "crisis" was to be conceived, not only as a historical-empirical phenomenon of his time, but as a category of reason denoting the "loss of intuitive evidence" characteristic of both theoretical as well as practical commitments – a category that also unfolded in the generative development of communities. By discussing the idea of personal self-responsibility in regard to his novel understanding of the temporal dynamism of human subjectivity, Husserl was able to account for a positive sense of the crisis as the active responsiveness to the loss of meaning.

1.1. On the Crisis of the Modern Body Politic

In *Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit* (*A Cultural History of the Modern Times*, published 1927–1931), Egon Friedell writes:

> In the life of state and society, in the history of art, science and religion we can observe that the loss of balance should not be conceived merely as a harmful phenomena; on the contrary, every fruitful renewal can only be attained through a "revolution" […] From the old perspective, this condition must always look as morbid […] The idea that the phenomenon of sickness has closely linked to the secret of becoming, has been widespread in all times of humanity.[24]

Indeed, Friedell's three-volume work seems like an intricate medical casebook. Drawing back to Spengler's popular morphology of culture as well as to Herder's poetic historiography, Friedell wanted to offer a full-fledged and comprehensive history of the modern age through the manifold dynamism of different forces, most importantly, through the concepts of sickness and health, disease and cure. In the heart of the modern history, Friedell located a specific spiritual condition – the "crisis of European soul" – which was not to be conceived as a univocally harmful event but also as a productive one.[25] According to this diagnosis, the crisis

[24] Friedell 2007: 65.
[25] Friedell 2007: 236ff.

dated back to 1348 and the painful experience of the Black Death, which first released the medieval human being from the belief in the rational course of things.[26] "So many died that all believed it was the end of the world," wrote Agnolo di Tura, a Sienese witness of the Black Death – and indeed, as Friedell put it, it was the beginning of the end of the medieval world. Followed by what Friedell called the "incubation period" of the late fourteenth and the early fifteenth century, the crisis became all more apparent: through the crisis of the Western Christianity, the discovery of the New World, and the emergence of the new monetary economy, the world of "God-inspired mystery" was gradually replaced by "man-made rationality". Lastly, the "materialistically oriented" Italian Renaissance produced a kind of anarchy within the European soul with its disbelief in everything.

Thus modernity, Friedell argued, was to be understood as a constant striving to overcome this crisis – as an effort to heal the disease through a new ontological foundation of culture.

Although Friedell may be right in emphasizing the pivotal role of metaphors of sickness and health for *all historical periods*, we should perhaps be careful in applying the notion of crisis too hastily in connection to premodern thinking. With the discovery of the New World, the rise of new scientific discoveries and the rapid expansion of monetary economy, the period of early modernity may be defined in terms of regeneration; however, it is another thing to agree with Friedell that the Italian Renaissance, for instance, would have defined itself in terms of a crisis. For the people of fourteenth century, the Black Death was obviously a devastating experience, and it exterminated a third of the European population; however, the contemporary historians or intellectuals did not address it in terms of a social or a historical crisis. As for Agnolo di Tura, the "crisis" was a sign of the end of the world and not an open historical choice between death and renewal. The astronomy of Copernicus naturally transformed our modern view of the world radically – still, it was not experienced as a "scientific crisis" by his contemporaries. Most of the European economies suffered a recession at the turn of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but for the economists of the time, this was not a situation of crisis. (Actually, it was only through Marx that the concept of crisis established its position in the mainstream economics.)

[26] Friedell 2007: 63ff.

Of course, Friedell's poetic description is a product of its times. But this applies also to the notion of crisis: as a category of social, cultural or a political reflection it is a uniquely modern concept that is made possible by ways of thinking that are characteristic of this period of time. Modernity interprets historical events as breaks, transitions, or stops, and it does so against the background of the teleological horizon of historical consciousness, which projects history itself as a self-sufficient, transcendent flow of time. At the same time, modernity unfolds as a specific struggle on the genuine agency or driving force of this process: who, or what, is the subject of history that constantly descends into crises?

Perhaps this point can be illuminated by considering the conceptual background of the modern crisis-thinking. Up to the seventeenth century, the Latin word "crisis" was restricted mainly to medical usage. The early English, French and German translations (or adaptations) of this concept that appeared in the course of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were dominated by the medical sense, and it was only after the French Revolution that the German lexicons, for instance, began to acknowledge its social and political connotations. According to Reinhart Koselleck, the first instances of the metaphorical use of the word can be found in the contexts of French and English politics in which the crisis was used to describe a certain imbalance in the political order; for instance, the insecure prospects of the Parliament or the instability of economy.[27] The idea of general cultural crises is a relatively late idea that first appeared in the course of nineteenth century, but really came into fruitition only in the beginning of the twentieth century.

One of the central reasons behind the early adaptation of crisis-metaphor was that both the English and the French political cultures had been heavily influenced by the tradition of "body politic" (*corpus politicus*), that is, the analogy between the human body and the state (or society). This analogy was deployed throughout the medieval times, for instance, in the *Policraticus* (1159) by John of Salisbury, often considered the antecedent of modern political science. Salisbury employed the physiological model in his political ontology primarily in order to describe the natural order of power within the state: whereas the prince equated with the head of state, the senate represented its heart, the soldiers and officials functioned as

[27] Koselleck 2006: 362.

its hands and the peasants as its legs. Tyranny, for instance, was to be conceived as an imbalance of the political system, a "political disease" that can only be battled by acknowledging the compelling necessity of the natural order.[28]

Within the tradition of Western philosophy, the metaphor of body politic derives already from the political writings of the Greeks. In their descriptions of the character of the state (*polis*), both Plato and Aristotle rely on the image of the body (*sōma*), and they do so in two respects. As especially Aristotle emphasizes, *polis* is not an artificial construction of human beings (although he acknowledges a certain active element in its establishment) but rather something that necessarily belongs to human life. "Every *polis* exists by nature (*fysei*), inasmuch as the first communities (*koinoniai*) so exist," writes Aristotle, "for the *polis* is the end (*telos*) of the other communities for nature is an end."[29] For Greek philosophy in general, it was a shared presupposition that the being of man can reach its fulfillment only in the shared world of the *polis*; without a membership in a state, man is essentially incomplete. Thus without the whole "body" of the state, Aristotle maintained, there would not be a living "foot" (an individual) or a "hand" (a family) – *polis* is the common organism that vivifies all forms of human sociality and provides them with a teleological sense.[30] Alongside with this descriptive use of the analogy, the body was employed also as a normative category defining the righteous form of the state.[31] Plato articulated his societal revolution on the basis of a well-functioning body, and argued how the ideal state is arranged according to the virtues of temperance, wisdom and courage that all have their bodily counterparts.[32] In *Timaeus* we discover the analogy between health and justice – an

[28] John of Salisbury 1990: 67. On different interpretations of the body politic in John, see Nedermann 1987.

[29] Aristotle, *Pol.* I.2 1252b32–35.

[30] Aristotle, *Pol.* I.2 1252b27–30.

[31] These analogies could be applied also in opposite direction. The 5th century medical philosopher Alcmaeon discussed the idea of healthy body in terms of "political equality" (*isonomia*) – a concept that was most often linked to the idea of democracy – and sickness in terms of monarchy (*monarkhia*) in which one element exercises superior power in relation to other parts. See DK 24 B4, Longrigg 1993. In *Republic*, Plato discussed the *polis* as a heuristic model determining what makes a righteous individual: a human being can be said to be "wise" or "courageous" in the same manner as the state is (Plato, *Rep.* 441c–d).

[32] However, in order to realize his vision of rational somatics, he needed to warn off basically all foreign impulses (dance, music, and inappropriate poetry) from the political body. Plato, *Rep.* 442b

analogy which is called forth again in the *Republic* as Socrates characterizes the city of polarized wealth as "feverish".[33]

Following the thesis of Ernst Kantorowicz's book *The King's Two Bodies* (1957), the medieval idea of political sovereignty was born out of the conjuncture of the two ideas of the political body: the natural and the political. In line with the Christian idea of Christ's two bodies – the *corpus naturale* as the flesh-and-blood body of Christ, and the *corpus mysticum*, the collective, enduring body of the congregation – the sovereign was conceived as the embodiment of not only his own persona, but also of the collective, societal body of people. This distinction had important consequences for our modern view of sovereignty: by conflating the natural body of the King with the political body of people, the political community could be described as having a single interest, a single authority and a clear territorial outline. As in the case of Christ, the death of King's natural body could be reconciled through the remaining societal collective: through the idea of *corpus republicae mysticum*, the political body could be thought as pertaining within itself an infinite future horizon.[34]

The metaphysical-theological conflation of sovereignty and the body politic was challenged by several of the early modern philosophers. Especially for the representatives of the early modern liberal tradition, the state was now conceived as a result of an imagined pact – the social contract – that was established in order to argue for the necessity of political sovereignty. Instead of the compelling necessity of a natural body or a metaphysical conflation, political institutions derived their legitimacy through a voluntary covenant, though hypothetical, through which the individuals gave up on the absolute character of their will and submitted themselves to the will of political sovereignty. These thinkers – for instance, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke – did not completely abandon the metaphor of the body politic. Alongside with the notion of *corpus politicus* there emerged a wide variety of other personal metaphors – such as *magni homines* and *personae moralis* – that referred to the idea of a social body. Despite Hobbes' "atomistic" view of the human individual, even he referred to communities as persons ("*civitas est persona una*") and political bodies, although they were given an explicitly "fictious" character (*persona ficta*, "le-

[33] Plato, *Tim.* 42b; *Rep.* 372e.
[34] Kantorowicz 1957: 193ff.

gal person").[35] This shift was reflected also in the new legalist framework of the seventeenth and eighteenth century political theorists for whom the analogy of state and person was central above all for juridical reasons. It was crucial to ensure the state the status of a legal person through which it can establish pacts and agreements with other states.

Thus within the analogy of the body politic, we can acknowledge a shift from a genuine physiological likeness to a more heuristic approach: the state was not a real natural body, but could be likened to one for different purposes. This transition, however, was not reflected merely on the level of political and legal theory, but it was based on a significant transition in the very notion of *nature* itself. Against the Greek idea of *fysis* as a teleological process leading to the perfection of each thing, nature was now interpreted in terms of immanent and mechanist unity of causal laws, which, despite its changing seasons and even violent outbursts, remained fundamentally the same in essence. It was exactly this sense of sameness and staticism that served as the single most important foundation for the idea of political subject in the social and political thinking of modernity. The nature of this subject – as in the case of Hobbesian "state of nature" (presented in the chapter XIII of *Leviathan*) – was now conceived in terms of eternal and unchangeable foundation, which remains the same despite the changes in political institutions. And while Locke, for one, could not accept Hobbes' account of this nature as violent and completely asocial – and described the state of nature as that of "perfect freedom" – even he equalled "natural" with the static and unchangeable. "Nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness and an aversion to misery," writes Locke in the second chapter of his *Essay* – "these indeed are innate practical principles which […] continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions without ceasing: these may be observed in all persons and all ages, steady and universal."[36] Thus political institutions, through their constantly changing character, could only be acknowledged as something *supplementary* in regard to nature.

[35] Hobbes 1928[1640]: 93. From a Husserlian perspective, the liberal tradition was of great importance, for it represented the primary adversary for Husserl's own moral and political philosophy. Although many would find Husserl's interpretation of Hobbes' philosophical anthropology as purely egoistic to be simplistic or out-dated, for Husserl, the fundamental presuppositions of the liberal tradition were still influential. On the critique of Hobbes as an egoistic philosopher, see Gert 1967.

[36] Locke 1996[1689]: 16.

It was exactly this transition from the teleological to the causal-mechanist idea of nature that constituted one of the primary points of departure for Husserl's account of modernity in the *Crisis*.[37] According to Husserl's well-known thesis, modernity unfolded with the Galilean discovery of exact mathematical ideality as the universal language of nature, resulting in the unquestionable triumph of the natural sciences.

Nature, according to the Galilean account, was conceived as a homogenous space in which individual bodies interact with each another; instead of an innate striving towards their natural place, the movement of bodies was now explained in univocally *causal* terms, as resulting from external forces impacting the individual bodies. By applying the idea of an infinite geometrical space ("plenum") to the real world, Galileo was able to replace the Aristotelian threefold classification of movement with the univocal notion of motion according to place (what Aristotle had called *kinēsis kata topon*). This blueprint, as it turned out to be efficient in the measuring and prediction of the movement of natural entities, posed a radical challenge for the notion of teleology as a category of "objective" science.

Husserl's account of this development in *Crisis* was primarily theoretical. He wanted to point out the imminent corollary of the Galilean metaphysics in the fatal unclarities concerning the relation between the mental and the physical, resulting in the emergence of modern physicalism and its corollary, naturalistic psychology.[38] This did not entail, however, that Husserl would have ignored the practical consequences of this development. As Husserl emphasized in several occasions, the physicalist and naturalist psychology entailed a radical challenge for our ethical theories of the human being, particularly, to the ideas of individual responsibility and practical autonomy. If, indeed, innate striving could only be acknowledged as a subjective phenomenon, how could we speak of the political domain as something which arises from the voluntary co-operation of subjects? How can the state be anything else but a preventative measure for the arrangement of social relations?

Husserl critique of Hobbes was neither psychological nor moral. Already in his 1920/24 lecture course on ethics, Husserl criticized

[37] For Husserl's reading of Galileo, see HuaVI: 20–41. Cf. HuaIX: 3; HuaXXVII: 116; HuaXXIX: 131ff. See also Moran 2000: 142–145.

[38] See e.g. HuaVI: 64ff.; HuaXXV: 319; HuaXXIX: 110ff.

Hobbes' theory of state for its one-sided "ontological" presuppositions, which were apparentespecially in his account of human sociality. Although Husserl credited this theory for its inclination towards an a priori account of the normative ideal of human sociality (what Husserl called *formalen Mathesis der Sozialität*, "formal discipline of sociality"), due to Hobbes' atomistic view of human being this description could only amount to a "one-sided construction" of the social reality.[39]

By returning the essential complexity of our practical motives (e.g. empathy, hunger, sexuality, love, hate) to the will to self-preservation as the most natural drive of human existence, Hobbes could only acknowledge a *preventative function* for political institutions. As Husserl interestingly noted, "the empiricist Hobbes acts, without understanding this, as idealist. *He constructs pure, supraempirical ideas*."[40] Like Galileo surpassed the variety of eidetic givenness for the sake of exact mathematical ideality, similarly Hobbes founded his ethical and political theory on an idealized concept of human being as driven by "purely egoistic" motives.[41]

Thus from the perspective of political and social ontology, this transition had at least two far-reaching consequences. First, the early modern idea of human nature as the *static* and *underlying* character of man had produced a fundamental discrepancy between the human subject and his political, cultural, and social conditions.

This process was of course corresponded by the concrete disintegration of pre-modern social institutions (e.g. feudal institutions, estates and privileges); however, these transitions were based on a more profound transformation in the social ontology of modernity. By divesting the concept of natural law from its theological and teleological connotations, the political philosophy of modernity refused to take any form of human communality as simply natural or self-explanatory. Instead, by arguing for the essential artificiality of social and political institutions, this thinking intro-

[39] HuaXXXVII: 58.

[40] "Der Empirist Hobbes betätigt sich, ohne dass er sich selbst versteht, hier als Idealist. Er konstuiert reine, überempirische Ideen." HuaXXXVII: 57.

[41] As Leo Strauss – one of the greatest political philosophers of the past century, and a student of Husserl's – put it, it was exactly this Hobbesian-Lockean problematic that introduced the fundamental dilemma of modern political philosophy: should the "non-teleological conception of the universe" be "followed up by a non-teleological conception of human life" – or, should we be content with the "typically modern, dualism of a non-teleological natural science and a teleological science of man"? Strauss 1953: 8

duced a novel sense of *crisis* in the very heart of our modern concept of sociality: *the body politic was, if not fundamentally unnatural, constantly prone to disintegration*.

Secondly, because of the novel artificiality of the political institutions, this transition resulted gradually in the separation of two discourses of sociality: the moral and the political. Political sovereignty could no longer present itself as the moral foundation of its own power, but this power was to be assessed through a discourse external to it. Locke was the first to articulate this dependency in terms of state and civil society; for him, the civil society preceded the state and its institutions both morally as well as historically. As for instance Reinhart Koselleck has pointed out in his *Kritik und Krise* (1959), the 17th-century distinction between civil society and state was not only the beginning of a novel discourse of commonality – a new societal critique – but even more importantly, it gave way to a novel form of *utopian consciousness*. The state could no longer proclaim moral authority over the body of people, but instead, its legitimacy was to be contested in the sphere of public discourse: the society at large was now considered the moral conscience of the political community through which it gains its utopian thrust.[42]

The essential discrepancy that the early modern liberalism created in regard to the domains of the social and the political was not the final outcome of the problem of communal co-existence. Instead, the imminent crisis of the political body was tackled by several of the 18th and 19th century philosophers. From the perspective of this work, however, the answer given by G.W.F Hegel is perhaps the most important one, for his work points towards two ideas that turned out to be crucial in regard to Husserl's phenomenological social ontology: the idea of a transpersonal consciousness ("the objective spirit") and the teleological development of human sociality. Against the view of an atomistic individual, Hegel presents us with a teleological idea of human subject which necessarily constitutes its own self in relation to other subjects – and which finds its ultimate essence within a specific political institution, the state. Although

[42] Koselleck 2000: 83. This promise of a communal life free of political antagonisms, however, could not end but in a disaster. According to Koselleck, this replacement of the political for the sake of the ethical could only amount to the suppression of the essential multiformity of societal reality. As such, it paved way to the totalitarian forms of governance presenting themselves as the closure of political antagonisms.

Husserl's and Hegel's views on the development of self-consciousness had significant differences – to which I will return in the second part of this work – what they share in common is the idea that human life finds its genuine essence only within an intersubjective context that guarantees the realization of human freedom in its concreteness.

How does this teleology constitute itself? According to the classic description of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, all conscious life is fundamentally desire and as such, it is essentially directed towards its outside. In its primitive form, consciousness sustains itself by negating its outside, by consuming material from the outside world (for instance, by eating). However, this negating cannot yet afford consciousness with its specific autonomy; instead, it must find other means to secure its own personality as self-consciousness. Thus selfhood, Hegel argues, cannot be constituted only on the basis of one's reflexive capabilities, but it must be understood in relation to other self-consciousnesses: my perspective to the world is not absolute but partial and particular. Particularity, however, can only be understood in relation to the validation of other perspectives – of other selves who likewise need to confirm my particularity as indispensable. It is exactly this movement what Hegel calls by the title "recognition" (*Anerkennen*): "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it *is* only by being recognized."[43] Thus in recognition, desire transcends its unilateral consumptive function – it appears as desire for the desire of the other.

Recognition, however, is never attained once and for all. Instead, it must be acquired through a battle in which the consciousness sets itself into danger. As individual subjects aim at validating their sense of existence through others, they necessarily descend into a "struggle of life and death" (*Kampf auf Leben und Tod*) that, according to Hegel, can be seen as the general form of all human conflicts.[44] As Leo Strauss has argued in *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes* (1936), in this regard Hegel's view on the struggle for recognition could be read as analogical to Hobbes' idea of war of each against all – a reading that was also evident in Alexander Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (1934).[45] In its initial stage, this struggle

[43] "Das Selbstbewußtsein ist an und für sich, indem und dadurch, daß es für ein anderes an und für sich ist; d.h. es ist nur als ein Anerkanntes." Hegel GW 9, 109 (PhG §178).
[44] Hegel, GW 9: 111.
[45] Strauss 1996: 57; Kojève 1980: 3–30.

unfolds in the dialectic of Master and Slave, in which only one of the parties is recognized as autonomous, and in which the other side merely sets into the service of the desire of the other. This dialectic comes to its end only through a reciprocal relation in which both parties acknowledge their dependence on the recognition of the other. And here Hegel breaks with Hobbes: despite the inherent element of struggle, "the essential nature of self-consciousness is not bare existence, is not the merely immediate form in which it at first makes its appearance", but its nature or essence is that what it makes itself to be after this struggle for life and death.[46] (I will return to this topic in chapter 1.2).

All this belongs to the development of spirit (*Geist*). What we discover as a result of this dialectic is nothing less than the essential intertwining of our personal life with the common life, that is, the idea according to which individual consciousnesses can exist for themselves only within a unity of consciousnesses. Thus in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel presents this interdependence in terms of reciprocal analogy: "I that is a We, and the We that is an I".[47] This analogy was not to be conceived primarily with regard to bodily capabilities – although Hegel did resort to bodily and even dietary metaphors especially in the *Philosophy of Right* – but in terms of a teleological development in which the individual subjects come to their own right. It is exactly the "We" through which the individual secures its "objective" existence. Freedom cannot be understood merely in terms of the spontaneity of the subject, for this would lead to endless conflictuality, but is must be reconciled with the freedom of the others. Thus individuals, as they strive to secure this objectivity, establish for themselves a culture in the form of morality, customs, laws and institutions, which are able to secure my freedom as "objective". In Hegelese, the spirit transcends simple subjectivity and becomes an "objective spirit" (*objektiver Geist*).

According to Hegel's well-known thesis in the *Philosophy of Right*, the struggle for recognition is modern societies can only be pacified through a particular instantiation of the objective spirit, i.e. the state. It is only the state (and especially its public domain, the civil society) that can genuinely solve the imminent discrepancy between the subjective and objec-

[46] "Und es ist allein das Daransetzen des Lebens, wodurch die Freiheit, wodurch es bewährt wird, daß dem Selbstbewußtsein nicht das *Sein*, nicht die *unmittelbare* Weise, wie es auftritt, nicht sein Versenktsein in die Ausbreitung des Lebens" Hegel, GW 9: 111.

[47] "Ich, das Wir, und Wir, das Ich ist." Hegel GW 9: 108. (PhG §177).

tive aspects of human freedom. Although Hegel conceived this domain as essentially finite, it incorporated within itself an essentially universal component in the idea of citizenship; it is only within civil society that the individual is conceived solely from the viewpoint of humanity, and "not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian etc."[48] Thus the state, as it presents itself as the resolution for the crisis of modernity, pertains to the general rational structure of the world. It is, as Hegel puts it, "the unmoved end in which freedom comes to its supreme right"[49] –

> Insofar as the state, the fatherland, constitutes a community of existence, and in so far as the subjective will of human beings submits itself to laws, the opposition between freedom and necessity disappears. The rational, as the substantial, is necessary, and we are free insofar as we recognize it as law and follow it as the substance of our own existence; the objective and subjective will are then reconciled in one and the same untroubled whole.[50]

I will argue in part 2 that it was exactly this tendency of conflating the common spirit of community with its objective accomplishments that constituted the primary point of departure for Husserl's critical stance. In Hegel's description, the ideas of "We" and "culture" were fused in the quasi-personal objective spirit without really making explicit the difference between the constitutive process of the "We" and the constituted accomplishments. Therefore, Husserl insisted on differentiating between the transcendental genesis of the community (constituting a "personality of a higher order") and its accomplishments (which Husserl labeled as "culture" or "tradition"). This distinction served as the basis for Husserl's social ontology, which, as I will show in the last part of this work, should be understood in a critical relation towards the modern tendency of locating the best possible ethical community within a particular political institution.

Is there such a phenomenon as a crisis of "objective spirit"? Within Hegel's description of communality, the notion of crisis does not play any crucial role. However, there are good reasons to claim that Hegel also

[48] "Der *Mensch gilt so, weil er Mensch ist*, nicht weil er Jude, Katholik, Protestant, Deutscher, Italiener usf. ist." GW 14.1: 175 (PR §209)
[49] "Diese substantielle Einheit ist absoluter unbewegter Selbstzweck, in welchem die Freiheit zu ihrem höchsten Recht kommt." GW 14.1: 201 (PR §258)
[50] Hegel 1970: 57.

articulates a novel possibility of articulating the fundamental crisis of modernity – a concept that was like to argue that find its antecedent in the phenomenon which Hegel sees as crucial to the development of human culture, i.e. the process of cultural *alienation* (*Entfremdung*). Although this notion can be seen as defining the development of consciousness from the beginning on (consciousness alienates itself in the other), it acquires its specific cultural objective validity only in the formative process of culture (*Bildung*).[51] In its primitive form, alienation takes place in language, which constitutes the basic condition for individual interaction as well as the general social order (*Sittlichkeit*), which finds its abiding form in laws and institutions.[52]

Culture, accordingly, is never merely something that human beings actively create; it is also already given to individual as a model of life. We are born in the midst of accomplishments and ideals that are simply given to us: because we belong to different social contexts (e.g. family, civil society) we find ourselves situated between their different and sometimes even competing requirements. This discrepancy gives way to a peculiar form of alienation that Hegel calls the "tragic" or "unhappy" consciousness (*das unglückliche Bewußtsein*)[53] manifesting itself, for instance, in the competing loyalty-claims of the family and the fatherland (as in the case of Antigone), or one's children and God (Abraham). I want to live an authentic life which I can justify, but as a finite being, I am constantly compelled to choose between several different possibilities of action. This discrepancy, argues Hegel, produces an inherent "split" within the consciousness itself resulting in the "restless process of contradictory thought"[54]. At certain occasions it can rise above the complexity of its finitude and arrive at authentic self-certainty; at other times it must discover itself as being torn by the finitude of its existence.

[51] "Wodurch also das Individuum hier Gelten und Wirklichkeit hat, ist die Bildung. Seine wahre ursprüngliche Natur und Substanz ist der Geist der Entfremdung des natürlichen Seins." **("The means, then, whereby an individual gets objective validity and concrete actuality here is the formative process of Culture. The estrangement on the part of spirit from its natural existence is here the individual's true and original nature, his very substance.")** Hegel, GW 9, 267. (PhG §489)

[52] "Diese Entfremdung aber geschieht allein in der *Sprache*, welche hier in ihrer eigentümlichen Bedeutung auftritt." Hegel, GW 9, 276 (PhG §508).

[53] See Hegel, GW 9, 116–131.

[54] Hegel GW 9, 125

In his introduction to the English translation of the *Crisis*, David Carr argues for a radical distinction between Husserl's and Hegel's historical approach. Whereas Husserl's account of historical teleology pointed towards the opening up of a horizon of action for the present moment, for Hegel this idea was basically unknown. "The very idea of a true crisis of man," writes Carr, "with the fate of the human spirit undecided and hanging in the balance, is unthinkable in the context of the Hegelian theodicy."[55]

This idea, although suggestive, leaves room for closer examination. Although Hegel did not describe the idea of unhappy consciousness in terms of crisis, it was done so by some of the so-called Young Hegelians (*Junghegelianer*) – a group of philosophers who became known for their suspicion towards the finality of the bourgeoisie revolution. These philosophers such as Arnold Ruge, Bruno Bauer and Gustav von Mevissen all employed the concept of crisis in connection to the pre-eminently modern idea on the discrepancy between culture and the social body. As von Mevissen put it, the sole reason for the crisis of the modern age was the essential "incongruence between the culture (*Bildung*) of the century and its actual customs, forms of existence and conditions."[56] For him, it was one of the focal questions of the nineteenth century whether it could adapt itself to the demands of the modern age voluntarily or whether these changes would come about in the form of uncontrollable revolutions. In this regard, the idea of crisis was on the side of freedom – at the same time it was constantly attached to the organic and naturalist metaphors of revolution and evolution, of growth and decay. Bauer, in his turn, argued that while history was on the side of freedom, it would ultimately show the way for the solution of the crisis and create the world into a new form.[57] The idea of crisis as an exhaustion of culture was also articulated by Proudhon:

> Today civilization is truly in a crisis, one that has but one sole analogy in history, namely the crisis which determined the rise of Christianity. All traditions have been exhausted, all faith worn out; on the other hand, the new program is not yet ready and has

[55] Carr 1970: xxxv.
[56] von Mevissen 1906: 129. Quoted in Koselleck 2006: 385.
[57] Koselleck 2006: 386ff.

> not yet penetrated into the consciousness of the masses. This is why there is now coming what I call dissolution.[58]

It was particularly this idea of crisis as the incongruence between culture and human activity that turned out to be crucial to some of the most important crisis-thinkers of the late 19th and early 20th century such as August Comte, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Jose Ortega y Gasset. In all of their works, the development of modernity was inseparable from the process of alienation which gave this era its essential characteristic as a period of crisis. Already in his early works on the systemic character of social sciences, Comte addressed the crisis of modernity on a European scale, and saw it as resulting from the collapse of the old metaphysical-theological prejudices of the monarchic rule. The great flaw of European societies, however, was that they conceived this crisis in purely national terms and thus failed to appreciate the imminent need for a transnational societal reform. As Comte maintained, "the European crisis requires a European treatment"[59]; positivism must wretch itself out of the old metaphysical fallacies – and its reactionary political implications – and work out a new progressive-critical social ontology. This could only be brought about by "adopting an organic attitude", that is, by "turning all efforts towards the formation of the new social system as the definite object of the crisis".[60] For Marx, especially in his earlier writings, the modern alienation was produced above all by the capitalist economy and its tendency to dislocate human beings from their most primordial activity. In the context of *The Capital* (1867), this analysis grew into a more detailed account on the transformation of the value-form in modern capitalism, which, by decidedly dissociating the exchange-value of commodities from their use-value, could no longer account for an idea of human labor as the universal and commensurable source of value.[61] Instead, by divesting the commodities of their relation to human labor though the law of demand and supply (i.e. what Marx also analyzed as the "fetishization" of commodities[62]), modern capitalism had introduced a permanent "loss of foundation" into the most

[58] Quoted in Sorel 1969: 210.
[59] Comte 1975: 27.
[60] Comte 1975: 10.
[61] On the transformation of value-form in *The Capital*, see especially Chapter 1 ("The Commodity") in Marx 1990: 125ff.
[62] Marx 1990: 165.

fundamental cultural activity of human existence: work. Weber, in his turn, analyzed this development in regard to modern forms of governance which take the form of bureaucracy, and thus, involve increased specialization and rationalization. Jose Ortega y Gasset treated alienation as the key element in the constitution of mass societies that necessarily truncate the individual subjects under a single model of existence. Ortega's general theory of crises relied on his account of "negative beliefs" that characterize the death-struggle of all civilizational periods – there is one thing that people believe in, and that is that they do not believe in anything.[63]

For this reason, despite the mechanistic and idealistic variations of modern social and political philosophy, the organic metaphors of sickness and health, of growth and decay, had not completely disappeared. Instead, they had acquired for themselves a novel importance in the relation of human communities and their culture, its institutions, accomplishments and practices. The crisis was, as I have argued, the constantly prospective contradiction between human communities and their objective conditions of existence. As I will argue in the next chapter (1.2), it was exactly this relation, its fulfillment and pacification that came to define the modern teleological view of history.

There is, however, still one important context on the basis of which the organic metaphors turned out to be crucial in regard to the imminent crisis of modern political community. Especially for the German philosophers of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, there emerged a novel sense of organic and homogenous foundation of sociality – expressed in the German term *Volk*, a "people" – which aimed at resolving the essential discrepancy between the state and the body of people. As such, it constituted the point of departure for basically all varieties of modern *nationalism*, which, through the concept of nation (which derives from the Latin verb *nasci*; be born, to grow), was able to reinstitute the idea of natural growth into the heart of political and social theory. Herder (1744–1803) was the first to equate the idea of *Volk* with the state as such; he interpreted the political community as the natural outcome of *Volk* as a collective personality with its own spirit and soul (*Volksgeist*), expressing itself in cultural accomplishments such as language, poetry and folksongs.

[63] See e.g. Ortega 1958.

Nationalism turned out to be a genuinely European phenomenon – "European sickness", as Nietzsche put it[64] – insofar as at the end of nineteenth century, practically all of the ethnic communities of Europe understood themselves in nationalistic terms. Even the socialist movements of the nineteenth century, despite their internationalist tendencies, ended up in realizing their revolutionary potential in national terms. However, there was something special in the tradition of German nationalism not only because most of the early nationalists were German but because of the special role that was attributed to the German people. Following Herder, many of the early nineteenth century philosophers emphasized the idea a German "special route" (*Sonderweg*), which pointed towards the specific character and task of German nationalism. This idea constituted one of the central points of departure of J.G. Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* – a lecture course which Husserl discussed especially in his 1917 lectures on "Fichte's Ideal of Humanity" – which argued for the role of Germans as the "originary people" (*Urvolk*) with its specific mission in the European history. This mission consisted of rebutting the foreign infiltration of Latin and Roman culture, restoring the original relation to the primordial German culture, and being the example of a true autochthonous culture for the rest of humanity.[65]

Accordingly, this debate pointed towards two competing interpretations. Against the narrative of Kant and the French Enlightenment, which emphasized the essentially cosmopolitan tendencies of the European history, the German nationalism had a somewhat different take on this development. Besides presenting the history of Europe as that of particular peoples, this tradition emphasized the essential connection that prevailed between the spiritual traditions of Germany and Classical Greece. Articulated in its different forms by Winckelmann, Fichte, Hölderlin, and many others, it was a shared presupposition of this tradition that Germany could resist the foreign infiltrations of French universalism (seen as an heir of Roman cosmopolitanism) only by rearticulating the sense of mythological communality characteristic of the Greek world. This was also the path taken by Heidegger in his lecture courses of the 1930s – especially those of Hölderlin and Nietzsche – which emphasized the return to Greek ideas

[64] "den Nationalismus, diese névrose nationale, an der Europa krank ist […]" KSA 6.360.
[65] On Fichte's role in regard to the philosophy of the early twentieth century, see Bambach 2003: 72ff.

of *polis*, "people" and "rootedness" as the spiritual revival of Germany. It was the Greeks, as Heidegger put it in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*, who still understood the essential connection between truth, history and the political domain – who comprehended the *polis* not in terms of an agreement, but as the essential foundation (the *Da* of the *Da-sein* of people) for the sake of which the Greek humanity is historical.[66] It was the central task of Germany to reject the crisis of modernity by resuscitating this motive, for only German language, Heidegger argued, "still corresponds to Greek in terms of its philosophical character of depth and creativity."[67] Husserl, in his turn, followed the critique of the idea of *Urvolk* articulated already by Hegel in his lectures on world-history. As Hegel had argued, the spiritual strength of Germany had little to do with its natural characteristics or with the apparent semblances of German language to Greek. If Germany and Greece stood in connection, this was due to the teleological development of spirit, permeating the whole of Occidental history since the Classical period. As Husserl put it later, it was the unity of "task" (*Aufgabe*) instigated by the Greeks which connected us moderns to our historical foundations.

The organic nationalism of nineteenth century is an important phenomenon also because it brings us face to face with the most important rendition of the body politics of the early twentieth-century: fascism. Especially in the language of the National Socialist philosophers, the crisis of the Weimar republic was consciously framed through the organic idea of the "body of the people" (*Volkskörper*). This term gained prominence insofar as that it replaced the more traditional term "people's community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*). As Boaz Neumann has argued, the National Socialist ideology conceived the *Volkskörper* indeed as a "real body" that was prone to scientific, medical and technological manipulation.[68] This body of a people was seen as suffering from both the slow reproduction of its constituent parts as well as the harmful influence of a "foreign body" (*Fremdkörper*) – i.e. the Jewish people – which called for the imminent reaction of exclusion.

In the existing scholarship of Husserl, it is an often presented claim that his later reflections on Europe ought to be understood in connection

[66] Heidegger, GA 40: 161.
[67] Heidegger, GA 31: 209; Cf. Bambach 2003: 209.
[68] This tradition is well illuminated by Neumann 2009.

to the rise of fascism, to the frenzy nationalism and the rhetoric of *Blut und Boden*.[69] While I do not wish to undermine this influence, I believe that fascism constituted only a partial phenomenon of the overall crisis of modern political philosophy, instituted through the collapse of the teleological structure of human sociality. Even the emergence of fascism was to be conceived in relation to this crisis, as a kind of perverse return to the serene naturalness of the pre-modern humanity. If the Greek idea of body politic was to be revived, it was to be done in relation to the inextricably idealistic motive of Greek political philosophy, i.e. to what we might call the "political epoché" of Plato. I will return to this idea in part 3.

"Even more than comparing society to a family," Susan Sontag writes, "comparing it to a body makes an authoritarian ordering of society seem inevitable, immutable."[70] There are, indeed, good reasons to consider the idea of supraindividual persons and bodies as solidifying the existing societal relations – or, what is even more dangerous, as potential tools for the extinction of their unwanted parts. Still, as our social and political theory grapples with the problematic of social life on the basis of wide variety of individual-based analogies, this relation is far from being clear. While we are familiar with a set of conceptual frameworks referring to the artificial and mechanistic character of societal reality, it seems that these analogies still miss some of the most important aspects of human sociality. Thus, from Emile Durkheim's "collective *consciousness*" to John Searle's "collective *intentionality*", from Freud's "collective *unconscious*" to Frederic Jameson's "political *unconscious*", or, from the organism-driven economic theory of crisis and resuscitation to the Deleuzian imagery of "bodies without organs", our social and political theory is fundamentally entangled with the relation between the individual and the community – its spiritual, personalistic as well as corporeal implications. However, to fully appreciate the scope of these implications and their relation to Husserl's crisis-thinking, we need to consider the idea of crisis in relation to its temporal connotations in the modern teleological view of history.

[69] See e.g. Smith 2007: 388; Gasché 2009: 1ff.
[70] Sontag 1991: 92.

1.2. The Concept of Crisis in the Modern Philosophy of History

As we observed in the previous section, it was already a general tendency of Ancient philosophy to deploy the metaphor of the body politic in order to solidify a certain social and political order. The king was endowed with his throne because he naturally represented the head of the state. Although he may had been corrupt and ought to be replaced by a nobler soul, the practical analogy of the body and the state was rarely called into question. This goes also for the novel political theory of the seventeenth century, which seemed to push the framework of body politic towards a more heuristic direction: the corrupt monarch should be replaced, but the general category of sovereign power was to be left intact.

The implications of this analogy, however, were interestingly called into question by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's treatise *The Social Contract* (*Du contrat social*, 1762). In this work, Rousseau argued against the common inclination to simply separate between good and bad forms of governance – as in the case of "righteous" European governments and Oriental despotism. For Rousseau, corruption was not primarily a simple antithesis to good government but the natural outcome of all political institutions: every form of sovereign power has an innate tendency to lose its contact to the political body and to descend into conflict with the general will of the people. "This is the inherent and inescapable defect", wrote Rousseau, "which, from the birth of the political body (*corps politique*), tends relentlessly to destroy it, just as old age and death destroy the human body."[71] What Rousseau wanted to call into question with this comparison was the seeming eternality of political order: like organic bodies, all political constitutions (that legitimate the political power) should be understood as essentially transitory structures that can be reworked and renewed. This

[71] Rousseau 1968: 131. Thus for him, the political institutions are justified only insofar as they serve the natural sociality of human beings. "What makes the constitution of a State really solid and lasting", wrote Rousseau in *The Social Contract*, "is the due observance of what is proper, so that the natural relations [of individuals] are always in agreement with the laws on every point, and law only serves, so to speak, to assure, accompany and rectify them" (1968: 56).

was the significant modification that Rousseau conducted with regard to the idea of sovereignty: its only abiding foundation can be attributed to the body of people and its general will (*volonté générale*).

In the educational treatise which appeared on the same year, *Émile* (1762), Rousseau tried to find concrete evidence for the aforementioned split between state power and the body politic. Like many of his contemporaries, Rousseau had acknowledged a growing tension between the old absolutist state and the civil society; what he anticipated was a general cultural transformation that was taking over European nations one by one. This revolution, for Rousseau, was what he considered to be the "crisis" of Europe:

> The crisis is approaching, and we are on the edge of a revolution. Who can answer for your fate? What man has made, man can destroy. [...] In my opinion it is impossible that the great kingdoms of Europe should last much longer. Each of them has had its period of splendor, after which it must inevitably decline.[72]

What was particularly special about Rousseau's use of the word crisis was that it gathered together two important aspects that were decisive for our modern understanding of the concept.[73] First of all, Rousseau conceived the crisis as a disease that, instead of taking over a particular branch of culture, affected the political body as a whole. The crisis had revealed not only the inherent societal tensions within the body politic, but the fundamental *artificiality* of all political institutions: virtue had nothing to do with sovereign power, but it could only be attained by dismantling it. Rousseau introduced the "crisis of modernity" as the essential vacuity of those forms of human sociality that are upheld by "cultural" structures, e.g. laws, institutions, and conventions. Secondly, for Rousseau the crisis was not merely a description of the present moment but it was understood in an essential connection to a temporal horizon of expectation. Resembling the prophecy of Isiah on the Day of the Lord which brings "princes to naught and the rulers of this world to nothing" (40:23), Rousseau predicted a literal "revolution" within the existing social and political order – a revolution through which "the great become small, the rich

[72] Rousseau 1993: 188.
[73] Koselleck 2006: 372.

poor, and the king a commoner."[74] This sense of a recurring movement was also implied in the pre-modern sense of the Latin *revolutio*, which denoted the uniform and circular movement of celestial bodies, referring to the idea of inevitable return to the original state of affairs. In Rousseau's view, the "crisis" was exactly that moment of transition through which the body politic had reached its ultimate artificiality and taken a turn towards the natural social condition. In this regard, he was able to endow the notion of crisis with an important element of prediction, which linked this notion into a wholly new dimension of human thinking: the philosophy of history. This dimension, I argue, turned out to be crucial in regard to Husserl's crisis-thinking but also to phenomenology in general. On the basis of the broadened understanding of phenomenology as an essentially historical science, Husserl was able to articulate a notion of crisis that contributed not only to the identification of different discrepancies of meaning and sense but also to the creative transformation of the present moment on the basis of a future horizon of possible development. Instead of a necessary evil, the crisis was to become a condition of progress.

The idea of crisis as a form of historical *prognosis* rather than mere cultural *diagnosis* gained foothold especially towards the end of the eighteenth century. It seemed as if historians were no longer dealing with the past as such, but – to use the phrase of the medieval commentators – they stood on its shoulders in order to make sense of its direction. Herder, for one, saw Europe to be in the midst of a "great crisis", one, that was supposed to "discover and assess the inner forces of history, rather than continue paying homage to a naïve idea of progress"[75]. Novalis (1772–1801), whose basic stance was a bit more optimistic, observed the popular tendency to observe the Revolution as a "life-threatening and contagious illness", although this was basically "nothing else but the crisis of beginning puberty"[76]. Thus, it seemed that there was no real consensus on the outcome of the crisis – what was clear, however, was that this was not a matter of a mere local conflict. "It appears to me as if I were in a great crisis", wrote Edmund Burke (1729–1797) in 1790, "not of the affairs of France

[74] Ibid.
[75] Quoted in Koselleck 2006: 377.
[76] See Novalis' essay "Christianity or Europe" (1996: 29) where he insists on developing an emotional-based cosmopolitan philosophy in comparison to the legalistic universalism of Kant.

alone, but of all Europe, perhaps more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French Revolution is the most astonishing that had hitherto happened in the world".[77] For the observers of the revolution, 1789 had turned the crisis into a supranational phenomenon, depicting not only the current situations of single monarchies but of the whole of Western world.

It is by no means a simple incident that through the French Revolution, the notions of crisis and revolution became practically interchangeable. Both reflected the great modern transition in the notion of history itself: *the new idea of history as a self-sufficient and self-regulating process,"transcendent" flow of time*. Whereas for the Ancient and Medieval thought, the concept of history (Gr. *historia*) was mainly used to denote a basic "story" or "narrative" dealing with past events, the eighteenth century – through the specific idealization of this narrative – aimed at discovering a hidden plane behind the day-to-day events. This new idea of history as consisting of "homogenous empty time"[78], as Walter Benjamin put it, offered the basic framework for the history as a transcendental field of historical laws, temporal causality and so on.[79] If the seventeenth century was defined by the tendency to rationalize and systematize the phenomena of nature in a radically new way, the eighteenth century tried to do the same in respect to history: it aimed to find a systematic method and conceptual framework in order to work out the logic of historical development. Both "crisis" and "revolution" appeared as suitable notions for this new purpose because of their natural-scientific background: both of them depicted a recurrent movement which can be understood as apart from its particular appearances.[80] Both of them carried within themselves an aura of irreversibility, which suited well the purpose of progress.

Thus what is evident is that at the end of the eighteenth century, the concept of crisis gained itself a new temporal horizon. Rather than explaining short-term transformations, the concept began to denote extensive, and in many cases open-ended developments. As a philosophical-historical concept, crisis began to stand on its own: the medical connotations of a sudden change as well as the theological-eschatological sense of a final

[77] Burke 2007: 7.
[78] Benjamin 1992: 261.
[79] On this specific temporalization of history, see Koselleck 1983: 4ff.
[80] Koselleck 1983: 39ff.

judgment were gradually brought together under the idea of great historical transformation, which has its background-horizon in the overall development of humanity. Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), for one, spoke of three "great evolutions" of the European state system that had been established through the three great "crises" of the modern age – the crusades, the Reformation and the discovery of America – all referring to the idea of humanity's development at large.[81] In the work of Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884), crises were likewise referred to as "monumental events" that mark the turning-point from one historical epoch to another.[82] Following these connotations, Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897) spoke of crises as "accelerations of historical processes" that result from a repression and emancipation of different forces: as such, they were to be conceived as essentially similar in all historical periods.[83] Burckhardt, like Herder, warned against the typically modern tendency to conceive all political transitions as simple improvements, for the crises that mark the genuine evolution of humanity are rare, and moreover, they are difficult to recognize. Thus history, as it was articulated by the thinkers and philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, revealed itself as the interplay of two different elements: the necessary core or "logic" of development and the empirical crust of historical occurrence accompanying it.

This interplay between the ideal and the empirical was to become the defining element of the modern idea of scientific historiography. With regard to the first aspect, the ideal, Giambattista Vico's (1668–1744) *Scienza nuova* (1725) marks a special turning-point as the first consistent attempt to articulate the general dynamics of historical time. According to Vico, the idea of scientific historiography was made possible through the unique character of historical knowledge. According to him, history could be understood, because it is created by man. Actually, history was even more scientific than the natural sciences, for nature, as Vico argued, was essentially incomprehensible because it is created by God.[84] Behind the empirical course of events, Vico conceived the development of nations as a cyclical process, in which they progress from the archaic forms of life towards a more rationalized world-view. The threefold division between

[81] Koselleck 2006: 380.
[82] Droysen 1933: 328. Cf. Koselleck 2006: 386.
[83] Burckhardt 1943: 79, 289. Cf. Hinde 2000: 199ff.
[84] Croce 1913: 5.

"Divine", "Heroic", and "Human" stages was reflected in all domains of culture: in customs, language, politics etc.[85] This progressive "course of nations" was balanced by the regular "recourse" (*ricorso*) through which the societies return to the primitive simplicity of archaic world. "The nations mean to dissolve themselves," wrote Vico, "and their remnants flee for safety to the wilderness, whence, like the phoenix, they rise again."[86]

In the tradition of German idealism, to which we shall here include also Kant, the tension between the two types of history was reworked into the form of conceptual distinction: *Historie* and *Geschichte*. Whereas the first denoted a basic narration of past events, *Geschichte* (which originally means a "story") became the field of idealized teleology in which the general logic of historical development takes place. Now, it was namely this type of study – "history a priori" (*Geschichte a priori*), as Kant called it[87] – that became the central preoccupation for the idealists: it was their basic conviction that history should not consist of mere fact-oriented accounts of the past events but it should assess their meaning and purpose in a more general context. Most importantly, this intention should also include a *normative element*, that is, it should show how historical development is ultimately righteous.[88] As Kant wrote in his essay on universal history, because there one does not discover a natural purpose in the course of human affairs it is the task of the philosopher to unfold the secret plan of world history, ultimately leading towards the right and just global order.[89] Because human action appears to be driven by sporadic motives and arbitrary interests, the philosopher must set out to find the "secret art of Nature", which is internally directed towards the fulfillment of man's ethical capabilities. For Kant, the *telos* of this process was to be found in the perfect civic constitution (*republikanische Verfassung*), which would finally establish a universal cosmopolitan condition.[90] Finally, in the works of Schell-ing, Fichte and Hegel, *Geschichte* was basically coined with the

[85] Vico 1984: 336–340.
[86] Vico 1984: 425.
[87] On the possibility of "history a priori" in Kant, see his Akad-A. VII: 79–80, 108ff..
[88] See especially the essays "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht" in Akad. A VIII: 15–32; and "Zum ewigen Frieden" in Akad. A VIII: 341–386.
[89] Kant, Akad. A VIII: 17.
[90] Kant, Akad. A VIII: 351ff.

concepts of reason, spirit and humanity as such: history is the description of the humanity's cultivation into a higher level of reason.[91]

Since our interest lies in explaining the background of Husserl's philosophical discourse on crisis, I will focus on a particular instance of the modern philosophy of history that is particularly crucial from the perspective of this work. This is the *teleological* (or narrative) model of history that was anticipated by many of the eighteenth-century theorists, but systematically articulated by G.W.F. Hegel. According to my interpretation, Hegel's reflections bring together two important elements that were crucial from the perspective of Husserl's work. First, Hegel's theoretical framework articulated the course of history in terms of a *linear* development, which, through its teleological structure, pertained within itself a particular genesis targeted towards the fulfillment of an ultimate goal-idea (*Endzweck* or *Zweckidee*). Secondly, Hegel's philosophical-historical reflections were founded on the essential conviction on the pivotal role of Greek philosophy in regard to the continuity and unity of the whole European-Occidental tradition. Although Hegel's basic framework was not merely European but world history, he treated the Greeks as an important watershed between the spiritual worlds of the Orient and the West – as a point of transition that marked the emergence of the universal idea of reason. Through this transition, Hegel argued, the European character first obtained its "pliability and capacity for freedom", which came to function as the founding elements in the constitution of the modern nation-state. But most importantly, the Greeks were the first to articulate a notion of intellectual activity that was not confined to the traditional bounds of a cultural or ethnic unity, but which enabled the dissociation of spiritual meaning (or culture) from these bounds. "What makes us especially at home with the Greeks," Hegel wrote, "is that they made their world their home"[92] – and their name for this universal homeliness was nothing less than *philosophy*. Husserl's reflections on Europe, I argue, pointed towards a radical rearticulation of this idea.

The view that Husserl's reflections on Europe rely on an *arche-teleological* model of historical development has been widely acknowledged, and it has served as an important point of departure for several critical

[91] Scholz 1974: 361.
[92] Hegel 1995: 149.

responses.[93] According to Jacques Derrida's influential critique, Husserl's allegiance to this idea prevented him of taking a critical stance towards the fundamental presuppositions of modern historical consciousness. Besides committing itself to an unquestioned Euro-centrism, Derrida criticized Husserl's teleological-historical reflections for its unwavering allegiance to the ideas of inevitability and progress – an allegiance that Derrida interpreted in terms of unwavering commitment to the philosophical consciousness of modernity.[94] These critiques will be answered in the last part of this work. As I will argue in part 4, Husserl's reflections on Europe committed themselves to the historical thinking of modernity in the sense that they took their point of departure from the ideas of *teleology and progress*. However, instead of simply paying homage to these ideas, Husserl aimed at a radical rearticulation of these ideas on the basis of his phenomenological approach. In order to appreciate the radicalism of Husserl's approach, let us focus on their background in Hegel's work.

Hegel, History, and Teleology

Hegel's approach to the problem of history was founded on the basic presupposition according to which philosophy – the universal science of being – represents the highest and most comprehensive form of historical reflection. In the introductory part to his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel introduced the philosophical account in contrast to two alternative models of historical reflection: the *original* and the *reflective*.[95] Hegel introduced this threefold division in connection to the aforementioned distinction between *Historie* and *Geschichte* and aimed at giving it a more detailed and concrete form. Instead of simply separating between the empirical and ideal aspects of historical development, Hegel argued for the necessity to approach this division from the viewpoint of the historian and the respective modes of cognition: all forms of historical reflection, as they apply general concepts and categories to particular events, embody

[93] See e.g. de Man 1983: 14ff.
[94] Derrida 1992: 27.
[95] Hegel 1970: 12ff.

within themselves both ideal as well as empirical aspects. Therefore, even the philosophical reflection cannot simply do away with the concrete historical events of a time; instead, the point is to understand this form of reflection as a specific approach to the particular and general aspects of history.

Let us focus shortly on the differences between these forms. With the idea of "original" historiography, Hegel basically denoted a direct account of past events that does not impose any moral standards upon the described events nor speculate about their general meaning. In this form of historiography – represented by figures such as Herodotus, Thucydides and Julius Caesar – there is really no difference between the "spirit of the writer" and the "spirit of the actions": the act of narration and the story told are essentially bound together. The reflective history, in contrast, is marked by a peculiar distance to the past events. In this form of historiography – which is divided into several subdivisions – the writer discusses the historical material out of his own situation, "in his own spirit which is different from the content itself"[96]. Reflective history can be either (a) *general* in the sense that it deals with extensive historical connections; (b) *pragmatic* in the sense that it leans towards moral teaching; (c) or *critical* in its motive for examining the credibility of the past descriptions.

Closest to the final form of historiography, the philosophical, is a particular instance of the reflective historiography, "specialized history". This form examines the historical development of the objective spirit and how it is reflected in the domains of art, justice and religion. Accordingly, this type of history aims at explaining the historically conditioned character of cultural accomplishments, and it does so through abstract concepts and by adopting a general "point of view". This type of historiography had been introduced before Hegel by the German historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) who first introduced the category of historical style to art history. Winckelmann was the first to differentiate between the unique historical standards of Greek, Greco-Roman and Roman art; the late eighteenth century neo-classicists movement that accentuated Germany's close relation to the Greek world drew inspiration from his writings. It was this inclination that gave Winckelmann the label of a "historicist", which here meant basically the sensitivity towards

[96] Hegel 1970: 14.

the different standards of historical periods. In his lectures on aesthetics, Hegel relied on Winckelmann's ideas by developing his own theory of aesthetic standards and their progression. More importantly, Hegel developed this standpoint into a general theory of the "spirit of the age" and how it is reflected in all domains of culture. Even philosophy – although it deals with universal truths – was to be comprehended in regard to its culturally and historically specific conditions. "As far as the individual is concerned, each individual is in any case a child of his time," writes Hegel in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, "thus, philosophy, too, is its own time comprehended in thoughts."[97]

This insight constituted the point of departure for the ultimate form of historiography, the philosophical. This form did not restrict itself to a particular domain of culture, but it aimed at an overarching account of the development of spirit as a whole; hence, it deserved to be called *universal history*. But even more importantly, philosophical history was not defined merely by its scope, but by its methodological presupposition, that of rational development: "The only thought that philosophy brings with it is the simple thought of reason, that reason rules the world, and that world history has therefore been rational in its course"[98]. In other words, for Hegel philosophical history was namely this contemplation, which aimed at revealing the purposeful character of world history by showing how it is directed towards the fulfillment of its own inherent principle: reason. In other words, it did not merely compare individual historical periods with one another but it aimed at discovering their essential interdependence, and finally, their overarching unity. In other words, this type of history was to be called *teleological* – it aimed at discovering the underlying *telos* of historical development.

However, to take this idea of teleology as a leading clue of historical development does not mean that it should be accepted simply and blindly. Hegel set himself forcefully to oppose those professional historians – as well as the earlier idealist tradition – which in his view had imposed "a priori fictions" into history at the cost of actual historical evidence. Hegel was quite explicit in claiming that we should take "history as it is, and

[97] "Was das Individuum betrifft, so ist ohnehin jedes ein Sohn seiner Zeit; so ist auch Philosophie ihre Zeit in Gedanken erfaßt." Hegel 1991: 21.
[98] Hegel 1970: 20–21.

proceed historically, empirically"[99]; the metaphysical dimension of world history should be understood as the *result* of our historical considerations, not as a given presupposition of philosophical speculation. At the same time, Hegel was arguing against those historians who claimed to be purely "receptive" and merely surrendering to the given historical material. History is a narrative: not merely by convention but by "the nature of its content, which it makes prosaic"[100].

But what really is meant by rational development? The conceptual framework of Hegel's *Lectures* is, as known, highly abstract. He portrays the world history as a process in which its substance, the "spirit" (*Geist*), gradually attains a higher level of self-consciousness. By doing so, the spirit realizes its inherent principle, the idea of freedom: "As the substance of matter is gravity, so, we must say, the substance, the essence, of spirit is freedom"[101]. Thus for Hegel, world history has its goal in nothing else than in the consciousness of spirit of its freedom, and thus the full "reality" (*Wirklichkeit*) of its freedom in general. What makes this process rational is namely the fact that it is guided by the principle of self-transparency – the spirit becomes more reflective of its ultimate *telos* – and by doing so, it elevates humankind into a higher level of responsibility. Even though Hegel often deploys the notion of spirit in congruence with God – and asserts to be clarifying the basic problems of Christian theology – the spirit is not an abstract entity that could exist on its own. The spirit does not create the world nor does it judge its events. On the contrary, the spirit lives incorporated in human existence, in the form of human consciousness and will. Thus for Hegel, the essence of the spirit converges with the essence of humanity, which is also aimed in realizing its own freedom: in world history, the spirit is manifested in the element of human will. "This is the true *Theodicy*," writes Hegel, "[…] that what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God', but is essentially his work."[102]

This did not entail, however, that Hegel would have completely neglected the categories of nature in his philosophy of history. With regard to the mode of historical time and its development, the analogy of organism turned out to be significant in two regards. First, Hegel employed this

[99] Hegel 1970: 22.
[100] Hegel 1970: 96.
[101] Hegel 1970: 30.
[102] Hegel 1970: 29. See also 539ff.

analogy to describe the self-perpetual character of historical development. "Just as the seed bears within it the whole nature of the tree and the taste and form of its fruits", wrote Hegel in the *Introduction*, "so also do the first traces of spirit contain virtually the whole of history"[103]. What Hegel was proposing here, was by no means a doctrine of historical predestination. On the contrary, what he was sketching was more like a theory on the origin-dependency of history. In the same way as a tree relies on its roots while growing, historical development always braces against its origin and preserves this within itself: the *genesis* of history is univocal because of its *arche*. Secondly, even though the spirit as such cannot be destroyed, its particular instances follow the somewhat "natural" pattern of growth and degradation. These instances – the spirits of peoples and nations – go through the periods of maturation, bloom and decay, for it belongs to the very structure of spirit to renew itself and pave way for new forms of life. Thus in the Hegelian framework we should not interpret the dissolution of particular cultures as a harmful phenomenon: from the perspective of world history, the transition of particular spiritual forms is always a form of progress.

Despite the concurring use of organic metaphors, Hegel also insisted that the idea of historical development should be distinguished from that of natural entities. Even though both can be understood as following a teleological pattern – both are aimed in fulfilling a principle that is inherent to their essence – the way in which historical development is disposed to this teleology is fundamentally different: "World history arises from the soil of the spirit, not of nature, and so its ultimate end can only be deduced from the nature of spirit"[104]. This soil, which constitutes the genesis of history, is by essence a conflictual one. Whereas according to Hegel, natural development is in its essence "immediate, unopposed and unhindered", producing the similar form over and over again, the spirit finds itself in "a hard and unending struggle with itself"[105]. The development of spiritual entities does not follow the blind regularity of natural growth, but as an autonomous and self-regulating progress it is open to even radical varia-

[103] Hegel 1970: 31.
[104] Hegel 1975: 212. "The reawakening of nature is merely the repetition of one and the same process; it is a tedious story with always the same cycle. There is nothing new under the sun." (1975: 61).
[105] Hegel 1975: 127.

tion. In other words, the unfolding of the spirit and its accomplishments is always *reflective* in respect to the acquired form.[106]

Already in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, Hegel stressed the role of negativity as the guiding principle of the development of conscious life: the whole development of "living substance" is spurred by the observation that it is not self-sufficient, that it is "truly realized and actual (*wirklich*) solely in the process of positing itself [...] from one state or position to the opposite."[107] Now, as Hegel acknowledged, although some of the Ancient thinkers did consider "void" or "nothingness" to be the central principle of movement, even they did not think comprehend this negativity (*Negativität*) on its own right, but only in terms of *privation* of being. The negativity that Hegel had in mind, however, did not denote mere privation; it was rather the perpetual "overturning" or "evacuation" of a particular positive substantiation of the spirit.[108] "Spirit is usually spoken of as subject", Hegel writes in his *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, "as doing something, and apart from what it does" – however:

> [...] it is the of the very nature of spirit to be this absolute liveliness (*Lebendigkeit*), this process, to proceed forth from naturality, immediacy, to sublate, to quit its naturality, and to come to itself, and *to free itself*, it being itself only as it comes to itself as such a product of itself; *its actuality being merely that it has made itself into what it is*.[109]

In the phenomenological tradition, primarily because of Heidegger's interpretation, it has become common to consider Hegel as a thinker of pure presence, of actuality and self-sufficiency. As Heidegger put it, Hegel's philosophy followed the basic question of Ancient philosophy (*ti to on?* – what is a being?), and in this pursuit "Hegel understood being as absolute, in advance and without question".[110] However, there is a good

[106] Hegel 1975: 61. As Hegel argues in his lectures, even though the Romans adopted their gods from the Greeks, the whole metaphysical framework of divinity and the practical field of idolatry were radically different. Whereas the Greeks "made their Pantheon the embodiment of a rich intellectual material, and adorned it with bright fancies", writes Hegel, "the spirit of Romans did not indulge and delight itself in that play of a thoughtful fancy": their relation to the divine was that of "frigid understanding and of imitation."

[107] Hegel GW 9: 18.

[108] Ibid.: "Sie [die lebendige Substanz] ist als Subject die reine *einfache Negativität* [...]"

[109] Hegel 1978: 6–7.

[110] "Es war gefordert, weil das Sein für Hegel ohne Frage vorhinein absolut verstanden war und diese Absolutheit und Unendlichkeit selbst nicht weiter Problem wurde [...]."

reason to claim that for Hegel, the "actuality" of spirit was really, however, the constant de-absolutisation of its particular contents. It is not the case as if there was first an actual spirit, which then would alienate from itself and consequently return to an elevated actuality; rather, this very movement of negativity is the very substance of the spirit.[111]

The general form of this perpetual struggle is, of course, what Hegel calls *dialectics*. The world history is constituted through an antithetical struggle of competing views, passions and accomplishments – a struggle in which the humanity constantly re-establishes its own being. Now, as Hegel points out, the great scene of world history has not been (and is not) "a theatre of happiness": the transition from one historical epoch to another is often established through a violent outburst. Like in the case of French Revolution, the collapse of absolutist monarchy was followed by Montesquieu's Reign of Terror, which in turn needed to be overcome in order to arrive at what one might call a normal state. This is exactly what Hegel means with his renowned concept of "cunning of reason" (*List der Vernunft*): what first seems like an irrational burst of passions – a fall to barbarism, a loss of direction – contributes to the common good at the end. For this reason, it is the destiny of the true agents of history, the great historical individuals, to find themselves in peril of their life. Like Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon – because they do not actually belong to the spirit of time, but they are aroused by the nascent and unconscious spirit of future – they die early, are murdered or deported. It is namely this feature that gives history its *progressive* character: "In the world of spirit, every change is a form of advancement"[112].

It was exactly this thesis on the essential progressivity of history that ultimately distinguished Husserl's notion of teleology from that of Hegel's. As I will show later in part 4, while Husserl rearticulated the motive of negativity in history, and conceived history in terms of an origin-dependent teleology, he nevertheless insisted on a more radical idea of *openness* as the guiding motive of historical reflection. Teleology was to be divested not only of its naturalistic connotations but also of its eschatological sense as the necessary progression of humanity. Instead of the dialectical or "synthetic" development of thesis and antithesis, the inner logic of history was

Heidegger GA 32: 105.

[111] Ameriks 2000: 91.

[112] Hegel 1975: 128.

to be conceived through the interplay of "absolute" and "relative" ideals, pointing towards the essential inexhaustibility of historical development.

But how did Hegel conceive the *telos of history*? For some time, the well-known phrase on the "end of history" has been one of the most salient legacies of Hegel's philosophy of history. Especially through the works of Marx and Alexander Kojève – as well as the more recent analyses by Francis Fukuyama (1992) – this idea has gained new relevance by becoming one of the central themes of contemporary socio-political criticism. Hegel's thesis has been called forth in order to make sense of the ideological clashes of the twentieth century as well as the hegemonic structures of today's world politics. Looking back in the twentieth century, it has been an inseparable feature of socialist movements as well as our contemporary form of liberal democracy that they have presented themselves in the light of this idea, as representing the last stage of history (or the Marxist "end of prehistory") or the exhaustion of other possible ideologies. On a broader scope, this view has become one of the main features of the intellectual position we know as *postmodernism*: the idea that we have lost faith in all forms of "grand narratives", which give history its universal direction.[113]

Despite the popularity of this idea, with regard to Hegel's own view the edge has often been a somewhat more critical one. It has been often argued that Hegel, who was willing to attach this expression to his own age, fell into the victim of both political conservatism as well as a general hubris with regard to his position in world history. By exaggerating the emancipatory achievements of the French Revolution and its effect on the Germanic nations, Hegel neglected the significance of later historical development: the rise of the United States of America, the European revolutions of the late nineteenth century, the ideological clashes of twentieth century and so on. Particularly Kojève has entertained the idea that for Hegel, the Battle of Jena in 1806 signified the moment when "history is being completed or has been completed"[114].

In his discussions on the goal-directed character of history, Hegel introduced the concept of "ultimate goal" (*Endzweck*).[115] In his *Lectures*, Hegel

[113] On the idea of "grand narratives", see Lyotard 1979: 1ff. I will return to this issue in part 4.

[114] Kojéve 1980: 44.

[115] Hegel was relying particularly on Kant's and Fichte's discussions on the teleological and normative character of human life, in which the concept of *Endzweck* played a crucial role. Hegel 1970: 29.

defined the notion of *Endzweck* as the basic principle of historical development, towards which the world history strives for – but also, as that what God wants of the world. It is important to note that for Hegel, the concept of ultimate goal was by no means a purely formal principle of historical development. As Hegel maintained, the idea of ultimate goal implied merely that the end is to be "realized, made actual"[116]. Historical progress *in infinitum* was an impossible category, for without a definite aim, historical development would make no sense. Again, we can see the influence of Christian eschatology at work: for Hegel, as also also Kojéve affirms, the teleology of world history is by no means *infinite* but *limited*.[117] Without this ultimate limit of the "Last Judgment", the whole idea of the righteous character of the world would lose its ground. However, it equally important to pay attention to the fact that for Hegel, the ultimate goal did not denote end in the sense of extinction nor did he sketch an apocalyptic vision of destruction. What he meant with this concept was the fulfillment of the guiding idea of history and thus the *exhaustion* of all the central possibilities of historical development. Time does not stop, but the fundamental struggles that have characterized the development of the spirit are reconciled in a way that the dialectical movement of history comes to an end.

Yet in the framework of Hegel's *Lectures*, the end of history as a concrete event does not find a simple and univocal answer. In the most general level of inspection, it is the very broad definition of European culture that takes the place of the ultimate goal: "World history travels from East to West, for Europe is absolutely the end of world history, Asia the beginning"[118]. According to Hegel's controversial thesis, the 'German nations in Christianity' represent the "end of history" in the sense that they were the first to guarantee the "objective freedom" through the universalistic legislation of the civil society. This was the great achievement of the German Enlightenment, and with its "formally absolute principle [of universal reason] we come to the *last stage of history, to our world, to our time*."[119] However, there are also indications that seem to question this view. Hegel refers to America as "the land of the future", on whose role "has yet to be revealed

[116] Hegel 1970: 29.
[117] See also Kojéve 1980: 148.
[118] Hegel 1970: 134.
[119] Hegel 1970: 524.

in the ages which lie ahead"[120] – similar kinds of references are made with respect to the Slavic world.[121] These kinds of remarks remain somewhat ambiguous, for Hegel does not fully elaborate whether the New World truly represents a different stage in the course of world history, or merely the continuation of the European world.

Despite the imminent controversies regarding Hegel's account of the "end of history", what we can perhaps say without hesitation is that his idea of historical development was ultimately unilineal in its progression. As he concluded in his lectures on world history, philosophy was ultimately concerned only with the "glory of the Idea mirroring itself in the history of the world", and as such, it could not imagine any greater alternative than the modern nation-state. The state reflected, as Hegel put it in *Philosophy of Right*, the "march of God in the world".[122] It was basically unimaginable that it could undergo a deep crisis, that the universalistic motive of the civil society could undergo a genuine decline.

Hegel's ideas were not univocally accepted. Marx, like many of the Young Hegelians, emphasized the essentially incomplete character of the French Revolution, which had merely replaced the old estates with the new tyranny of the bourgeoisie. Hegel's view could only amount to a highly idealized view of political freedom – one, which completely abstained from the material inequalities of concrete societal reality. Still, even Marx – especially in his earlier works that were keener to speculate on the direction of history – could not let go on the narrative and progressive character of historical development. The *Manifesto* of 1848, for instance, emphasized the self-destructive character of the bourgeoisie state, which, by endowing its conditions of existence to the hands of the proletariat produced nothing less than its "own grave-diggers".[123] Hence the fall of the bourgeoisie and the victory of the proletariat were "equally inevitable"[124] – as Burckhardt's crisis, this event merely *released* the historical forces hidden due to the incubation.

It was perhaps Nietzsche who was the first to articulate the most comprehensive critique against the concept of progress, not just as an

[120] Hegel 1970: 114.
[121] Hegel 1970: 422, 500.
[122] GW 14.1 §258.
[123] Marx and Engels 1967: 94.
[124] Marx and Engels 1967: 96.

empirical phenomenon, but as a general category of modern historical reflection. Already in his early work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) Nietzsche presented his reading on the suppressed Dionysian element of pre-classical Greek culture in contrast to the "phlegmatic emotionlessness" of the modern culture, which, in its hatred towards everything "barbaric", had lost the genuine vitality of all artistic creation.[125] In his later works, this insight grew into a more comprehensive critique on the anti-humane character of Western philosophy and Christianity, which had lead to the suppression of our basic instinctual energies – a process which he often called by the name of *decadence*.[126] Following the Rousseauan insight on the corruptedness of culture, Nietzsche proclaimed that "mankind surely does *not* represent an evolution toward a better or stronger or higher level as progress is now understood […] This 'progress' is merely a modern idea, which is to say, a false idea."[127] But even Rousseau, Nietzsche claimed in his late fragments assembled together under the title "The Will to Power", fell victim to the "defense of providence", for "he needed God in order to be able to cast a curse upon society and civilization; everything had to be good because God had created it[.]"[128] In other words, despite his skeptical attitude towards the development of culture and civilization, Rousseau needed to cling on to a faith on the essential incorruptedness of human nature and how it would ultimately reflect in the just course of world history. What Nietzsche called by the name of "good European" was exactly the figure of a person that refused to cling on to this faith – who posits his own criteria of development, his own values anew.

In this sense, Nietzsche prepared the novel transformation of sense that the concept of crisis went through in the beginning of the twentieth century. As he himself predicted in the final part of the *Ecce Homo* ("Why am I Destiny?"), his name was to be attached to the most "profound crisis" of modernity, a "decision that was conjured up against everything that had

[125] KSA 1.163

[126] See especially KSA 6.73: "Die Instinkte bekämpfen müssen — das ist die Formel für décadence"

[127] "Die Menschheit stellt nicht eine Entwicklung zum Besseren oder Stärkeren oder Höheren dar, in der Weise, wie dies heute geglaubt wird. Der „Fortschritt" ist bloss eine moderne Idee, das heisst eine falsche Idee." KSA 6.171.

[128] "[…] er brauchte Gott, um den Fluch auf die Gesellschaft und die Civilisation werfen zu können; alles mußte an sich gut sein, da Gott es geschaffen." KSA 12.448.

been believed, demanded, hallowed so far."[129] Instead of denoting the recurring movement of human culture towards its uncorrupt foundations, or, its elevation into a higher level of spirit through an epochal transformation, Nietzsche conceived the crisis in terms of a radical break, which pointed towards the possibility of a complete exhaustion of the founding ideas of the European-Occidental culture. This idea of exhaustion, which Nietzsche also discussed in terms of cultural illness (cf. Introduction), was to become one of the defining elements of the early twentieth-century debate on crisis – a debate that first introduced the ideas of radical finitude and relativity in to the cultural consciousness of the European modernity.

As I believe, it is necessary to situate Husserl's reflections on Europe – its universality and crisis – in this debate. In the following, I will argue that the early twentieth-century debate introduced a completely new crisis of reason, which could no longer commit itself to an idea of scientific rationality as the guiding principle of cultural development. Instead, by divesting scientific reason of its teleology and universality, this novel debate on crisis pointed towards an all-embracing loss of foundations within the field of culture – a loss that was also reflected in the domain of political thought. I will focus on this transition in chapter 1.3.

1.3. The Idea of Crisis in the Early Twentieth-Century Debate: Finitude and Relativity

We are now approaching the more imminent influences of Husserl's crisis-philosophy, namely, the philosophical, intellectual and political situation of the early twentieth-century Europe. This is the situation which forms the primary framework for Husserl's own critical position. Albeit influenced by the crisis-philosophy of the previous century, the crisis of the early twentieth century took on a significantly different form, contesting some of the fundamental categories of

[129] See KSA 6.365: "Es wird sich einmal an meinen Namen die Erinnerung an etwas Ungeheures anknüpfen, — an eine Krisis, wie es keine auf Erden gab, an die tiefste Gewissens-Collision, an eine Entscheidung heraufbeschworen gegen Alles, was bis dahin geglaubt, gefordert, geheiligt worden war."

the eighteenth and nineteenth century historical development; above all, the impregnable faith in progress that I have been sketching in the previous sections.

The idea of a *radical break* was of course inseparable from a particular event that set the course for the remaining century: the First World War. From today's perspective, the word "crisis" may seem too weak to describe the experience of all-embracing devastation and destruction produced by this conflict. Following Erich Ludendorff's famous recollection in his work *Der Totale Krieg* (1935), it might be justified to speak of the first "total war" in modern history. This idea of totality came forward, first of all, in the imperialistic motives of the war: the growing imbalance of colonial resources between the Great Britain, France and Germany had already spurred a series of conflicts at the outskirts of Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. It seemed inevitable that the forthcoming conflict would be *global* instead of local. Secondly, it became clear that the guiding motive of the new warfare was not merely to prove one's relative power by conquering particular regions that belonged to another sovereign power, but to maximize the devastation of the enemy – even to destroy the opponent as such. As Ernst Jünger put it in his thesis on "total mobilization", for the first time the war was fought not merely between national armies but between societies as mobilized wholes.[130] Economy, industry, science, art – everything seemed to be harnessed to serve the purpose of destruction.

To capture the complex traits of this extended *fin-de-siècle* period would of course be an insuperable task. Since my interest lies in articulating the basic framework of Husserl's position, I will focus especially on two themes that I consider as important with regard to his critical stance: the ideas of *finitude* and *relativity* of culture. As I will show in the following, "crisis" became a central symbol for both of these ideas: it denoted the situation in which the European-Occidental culture had to face the possibility of its extinction as well as the loss of its universal significance. In addition, I want to point out another important feature in the early twentieth-century debate on crisis, which ought to help us in understanding the specific conceptual approach of Husserl's work – namely, the idea of crisis as a *performative* or *perlocutionary* act. For the philosophers, intel-

[130] See the essay "Die totale Mobilmachung" (1931) in Jünger 1980: 119–142.

lectuals and political reformists of the early twentieth century, crisis did not only signify a certain state of exception, but it was fervently used as an imperative to react, as a demand to take exceptional measures. Rather than distancing himself from what I call here the *decisionistic* motive, Husserl aimed at transferring it from the sphere of politics to philosophy.

Despite the somewhat rapid emergence of an overarching crisis-consciousness at the turn of the century, it would be misleading to characterize this period solely as pessimistic or that of negative beliefs. As Fritz Ringer argues in his work *The Decline of the German Mandarine* (1969), at least for the German academic community of the early twentieth century, the imminence of the war was also greeted with enthusiasm.[131] As Arthur Liebert put it in his crisis-pamphlet of 1923, "a time without crisis is a dead time"[132] – the military conflict had introduced a novel countermovement to the rapid modernization and urbanization that had taken place at the turn of the century. The war, with its ideals of communality and sacrifice, was also seen as the possibility to return to a more conservative worldview, that of heroic and archaic values. As such, the war represented a powerful countereffect to the alienating powers of modern society: the urban social alienation and the abstract values that were brought by political cosmopolitanism and cultural-economic globalization.

Especially in the context of German intelligentsia, there emerged a variety of "war-philosophies" that aimed at interpreting military conflicts in terms of cultural revival and self-assertion. One of the most influential figures of this movement was Max Scheler, who wrote his enthusiastic and high-spirited work *Der Genius des Krieges und der Deutsche Krieg* (*The Genius of War and the German War*) at the outset of the war in 1914–1915. Scheler, who became known for his engagement with the phenomenological movement and especially the themes of value-ethics and philosophy of religion – and whom Heidegger called (posthumously) the "the strongest philosophical force in modern Germany"[133] – viewed the crisis of war in terms of a critical decision between Europe's rebirth and the "beginning of its atrophy"[134]. This gesture of reducing manifold historical developments into the form of *simple oppositional conflict* was an inherent feature

[131] Ringer 1969: 180, 245ff.
[132] Liebert 1923: 5.
[133] Heidegger GA 26: 62.
[134] Bambach 2003: 128. Scheler 1917: 322–323.

of the early twentieth century history of philosophy, something for which the crisis appeared as a simple and useful tool. Scheler's ultimate goal was to promote what he called "the spiritual unity of Europe"[135] that would have been based on a clearly delineated spiritual essence. For this reason, Scheler emphasized Germany's need to repudiate the weak empiricism of the "British Mind", the "vague" rationalism of the French, and the autocratic Orthodoxy of Russia – all of which were unable to construct this essence.

Husserl was no stranger to this pre-war enthusiasm. On the contrary, he was convinced that the impending militarily conflict would lead to the spiritual strengthening of the German nation. Emphasizing the immense courage of the German soldiers – two of them his own sons – Husserl praised the emergence of a collective will, which had introduced a novel sense of political idealism penetrating the whole of body politic. "We hardly live any longer as private persons", wrote Husserl in an enthusiastic letter to Hugo Münsterberg on the first year of the war: "Everyone experiences concentrated in himself the life of the whole nation, and this gives to every experience its tremendous momentum"[136].

For the generation of the early twentieth-century Germans, it was especially the work of J.G. Fichte that had become the most central point of reference for the ideas of cultural self-assertion and German unification by the means of warfare. Especially his *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (1807–1808) were fervently looked back as a model for the militarily-nationalist "ideas of 1914" – heroism, self-sacrifice and the establishment of a new collective will.[137] More importantly, through his encounter with the tradition of just war theory (*bellum iustum*) Fichte had introduced a novel idea of "war of liberation", which was to serve the autonomy and freedom of the German nation by refuting the foreign (i.e. French) influences and control.[138] As Husserl himself attested, the Germans had "gone

[135] Scheler 1917: 253–260.

[136] HuaXXV: 292. The letter appeared in English.

[137] Heidegger, who served as a young weatherman during the First World War, shared a similar passion of interpreting military conflicts in philosophical terms. Agitated by the French-Belgian intervention to Ruhr in 1923–1924, Heidegger proclaimed "the *Ruhrkampf*" to be the German version of "*gigantomachia*, once fought by the great Greek philosophers, which we Germans, in this 'land of poets and thinkers', are destined to make into our *Kampf*!" This excerpt belongs to the manuscript of a talk delivered on several occasions in 1923–1924, quoted in Kisiel 2000: 190.

[138] On the idea of just war, see Fichte 1971: 401–430.

out to fight this war in the Fichtean spirit as a truly sacred war and to offer themselves with full hearts as a sacrifice for the fatherland"[139] – in this regard, the war was to become the central antidote of the modern crisis of liberalism and its egoistic and self-centered view of the individual. Hence Paul Ricoeur's description of Husserl as a "thinker naturally unaccustomed to political concerns"[140], who came to realize the spiritual crisis of Europe only at the late stage of his career, seems somewhat unjustifiable. Although Husserl's *Kaizo* essays of the early 1920s represent a significant transition of perspective with regard to the problematic of just war, he nevertheless held on to the essentially political and social underpinnings of the modern crisis of reason.

Moreover, it would also be misleading to portray the crisis as a single, unified phenomenon. As Ringer points out, in the academic circles of the Weimar period (1919–1933) it was highly usual to claim that a crisis was in progress without really defining the exact character of this crisis.[141] Crises were claimed to appear everywhere: its variations extended from scientific "paradigm changes" to economic recession, from local quarrels to major conflicts in global politics. Judging on mere theoretical literature, the concept of crisis denoted different forms of social, political and economic devastation, reaching its fulfillment in the cultural and spiritual crisis of Europe.[142] Politically speaking, The Weimar Republic was indeed a "nation of crises" – a highly unstable political system that between the years 1919 and 1924 witnessed the formation of 12 different governments.[143] Between 1919 and 1933, the infamous "emergency decree" (Article 48) was invoked more than two hundred and fifty times until the whole constitution was subsumed under it in 1933.[144] The crisis became, very concretely, the permanent state of exception that was also inscribed to the existing juridical order.

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[139] HuaXXV: 293. For Husserl the war had revealed "the historical mission of the German people […] to light the way for all other peoples in philosophy." HuaDokV: 172.
140 Ricoeur 1967: 143.
[141] Ringer 1969: 245.
[142] See e.g. Harry Ritter's article on the notion of crisis in his *Dictionary of Concepts in History* (1986: 82ff.).
[143] West 1985: 1ff.
[144] Dyzenhaus 1999: 118–132. As Agamben notes (2005a: 3ff.), the jurists of the National Socialist movement spoke of a "willed state of exception" (*gewollte Ausnahmezustand*).

However, as Hans Sluga has argued, it was perhaps the aforementioned indeterminacy that gave the concept of crisis its efficient force in the day-to-day debate. The crisis became a general symbol of the present that allowed several readings: unlike most political symbols – such as flags, emblems, gestures and rituals – this notion carried within itself also a deeper intellectual dimension that allowed also philosophical underpinnings.[145] However, as it often happens with concepts that are extensively used, they turn into clichés. For many, the "crisis" became an empty phrase. Indeed, if we take a look at Husserl's comments to the debate on crisis – especially those of the post-war period – we often find formulations marked by extreme reservation with regard to "fashionable" debates.[146] Husserl wanted to distinguish himself from the typical brochure-writing hucksters or false doctors of culture preaching the "end of the world". However, he did not completely abandon this notion. On the contrary: instead of a topical issue of the day-to-day political debate, the crisis was to be seen primarily as a philosophical topic – as a useful category that needed to be "uprooted" and reinterpreted with regard to renewed understanding of the history of philosophy.[147] Before I move on to these reinterpretations, I will offer a sketch of their backgrounds.

Crisis of war as a sign of finitude.

"We later civilizations, we too know that we are mortal". These are the opening words of the essay "The Crisis of Spirit" ("*La crise de l'espirit*") written by a French poet and essayist Paul Valéry in 1919. Valéry, like many others, greeted the end of the war with somewhat mixed emotions. The sense of relief that accompanied the end of the military crisis was followed by the awareness that "the intellectual crisis, being more subtle and, by its nature, assumes the most deceptive appearances"[148]. "This crisis", he argued, "will hardly allow us to grasp its true extent, its phase". Following the basic tenets of many of his contemporaries, Valéry claimed that the Great War had deprived the Western mind of its fundamental belief in the

[145] Sluga 1993: 62
[146] See Ch. 1.4.
[147] On the idea of "uprooting" (*entwurzeln*), see HuaVI: 317.
[148] Valéry 1962: 25.

ideas of progress and the autonomy of reason, diminished the faith in the omnipotence of science and in Europe's role as some kind of torchbearer of humanity. Especially with the destructive outcome of technological innovations, the Western civilization had to confront an unseen experience of finitude: "Everything has not been lost, but everything has sensed that it might perish."[149] Taking advantage of the essential openness belonging to the notion of crisis, Valéry sketched the future of Europe as a kind of either/or situation between the options of remaining a little cape of Asia or becoming what it really was hoping to be: "the brain of a vast body", that is, the guiding force for the whole of humanity.

For the thinkers of the post-war Europe, these kinds of expressions were not unusual. The experience of devastation that the Great War had produced was indeed something inexperienced: 15 million casualties, almost 7 of them civilians; 21 million people were left seriously wounded. As if this had not been enough, the so called Spanish flu pandemic – although not straightforwardly caused by the war, but followed by it – raged globally between 1918 and 1920, killing at least 50 million people (though only 3 of them in Europe). Between the years of 1914 and 1918, Germany lost approximately 15 percent of its male population, and by the time of 1923, the heavy war indemnities had driven the nation into a severe economic crisis that was followed by a massive hyperinflation.[150] There was something in the very totality of these experiences that could not be neglected, something that gave the notion of crisis an apocalyptic stamp.

The primal reason behind the magnitude of the devastation was of course the significant changes in the modern warfare. The WWI was the first conflict to take advantage of the successive revolutions of modern technology, which raised the substantial damages into a wholly another level. As Martha Hanna and Kurt Flasch have shown in their extensive treatises, the WWI was also the first conflict in world history to deploy what they have called "intellectual mobilization": the use of academic community and intellectuals in order to create propaganda and arguments

[149] Ibid.

[150] For the first time, war was extensively studied from an economic framework: even though the warfare decreased the production of civilian goods, slowed down international trade and increased public expenditure, it also stimulated national economies and helped to fight growing unemployment.

for the war.[151] The war was fought also textually – in addition to the more theoretical war-philosophies, both the French as well as the German intellectuals debated frequently on the more practical questions (such as the famous Manifesto 93) relating to military actions. In addition, the war spurred a series of quasi-intellectual reflections on the national characteristics of the parties involved. The critique on the essentially German "egoism" and "militarism" was often matched by invoking to French "cowardice" or Anglo-American "superficiality" – a rhetorical *topos* that was also employed by the phenomenologists.

However, despite the sense of total annihilation that the Great War produced, there was also a shared feeling that perhaps the war as such was not the catalyst of devastation, but rather an outcome of a process that had long since been coming. Many were willing to subscribe to Stefan George's famous phrase "These are fiery signs – not tidings"; the crisis of war was interpreted to be a symptom of a more profound disease that had taken over the European-Occidental culture. As Rudolf Pannwitz argued in his post-war treatise *Die Krisis der europäischen Kultur*, the crisis of modern Europe was indeed something forgotten, rather than something recently erupted – something that the Great War merely brought back to consciousness instead of triggering it off.[152] Even before the war, it was somewhat usual to question the "naive confidence" in continuous progress and sustainable development. For instance, the French socialist philosopher George Sorel had published his ominously sounding work *Les Illusions du Progrès* in 1908, in which progress was criticized not only as a historical category, but as a false "ideology" whose origin was not in true science, but in the political visions of the eighteenth and nineteenth century bourgeoisie.[153] The ideology of progress, which Sorel wanted to replace with an essentially open view of historical development, was haunting also the Marxist tradition that was supposed to get rid of its unfounded historical prejudices. In the 1920 appendix to his work, Sorel maintained that "Marx easily abandoned the terrain of materialist philosophy of history in order to let himself be guided by the doctrine of *Weltgeist*."[154] As we shall see in the last part of this work, this interpretation is somewhat one-sided:

[151] On the idea of intellectual mobilization, see Hanna 1996; Flasch 2000.
[152] Pannwitz 1933: iii. Cf. Sluga 1993: 53.
[153] Sorel 1969: 13ff.
[154] Sorel 1969: 208–209.

Marx, like Husserl, emphasized the contextuality of historical reflection, which was supposed to function as the critique of the present moment.

Accordingly, in the academic literature of the post-war period, it was a common theme to explain the intellectual breakdown as something that essentially belonged to the notion of modernity itself. Especially in the humanistically oriented historiography of the early twentieth century, the crisis was often treated as a latent disease whose origin was to be discovered by returning to the previous centuries. José Ortega y Gasset, for one, traced the origin of this crisis back to the period of 1550–1650, to the birth of our modern ideas of "science and pure reason"[155] – whereas the French historian Paul Hazard located the roots of the modern "crisis of mind" in the period of 1680–1715.[156] As I noted in chapter 1.1, Egon Friedell lead the "crisis of the European soul" back into another, very concrete sickness: the Black Death. Despite the seeming incongruence of these analyses, what united them was a perception that the ideas that were fundamental to the modern edifice had come to their end – either in the sense of their exhaustion, or in the sense that they revealed to be unsound in the first place. As Robert Musil put it at the end of WWI: "The war can be reduced to a formula – one dies for ideals, because they are not worth living for"[157] – it seemed as if the war had suddenly demonstrated the burn-out of the European culture. This exhaustion, this idea of radical break was defined as the *crisis*. It was no longer a symbol for the transition to a higher level of culture, or to another historical epoch, but an expression of the radical *finitude* of the European-Occidental culture.

In the context of German philosophy, this experience of finitude found its most powerful expression in the work of Oswald Spengler. Spengler, whose academic career was somewhat unfortunate – he failed his first doctoral thesis –, shook the post-war intellectual world with his extensive treatise *The Decline of the West* (*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, published in two volumes in 1918 and 1923). With its radical vision of historical development as well as its unique style of expression, Spengler's work became one of the most important touchstones for the German intelligentsia – and one of the most powerful expressions for the European crisis

[155] Ortega 1958: 216.
[156] Hazard 1973.
[157] Musil 1955: 857–58.

of the twentieth century. As Gadamer put it in his recollections, although Spengler's "romance" was "made up partly of scholarship and mostly of world-historical fantasy [...], it was a genuine putting in question of the modern faith in progress and its proud ideal of profiency and 'accomplishing things'."[158] However, Spengler's vision was not greeted with sole acceptance and commendation – at least in the German academic community. On the contrary, his tendency to mysticism and obscure "poetic" expression made him an easy target of critique for both the positivist historians, the neo-Kantians and, of course, for phenomenologists. All in all, Spengler's work was better received among artists, novelists and essayists – and of course, among the masses.

What gave Spengler's work its eminent reputation was a flavor of messianic prophecy. Spurred by the so-called Agadir Crisis of 1911, Spengler had formulated his basic position well before the war, finishing the writing process already in 1914:

> In 1911, I proposed myself to put together some broad considerations of the political phenomena of the day and their possible developments. At that time the World War appeared to me both as imminent and also as the inevitable outward manifestation of the *historical crisis*, and my endeavour was to comprehend it from an examination of the spirit of the preceding centuries – not years.[159]

In the foreword to his work, Spengler claimed to be the first to attempt what he called a "venture of predetermining history" – a project whose character was obviously highly exaggerated. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the urge to control and predict historical events had been the central motive of crisis-philosophies since the eighteenth century. What is more, Spengler's morphological model relied heavily Vico's *Scienza Nuova* (1720–21) – which portrayed the development of cultures as a three-stage process from birth to decline – and the Russian ethnologist Nikolai Danilevsky, who relied on morphological metaphors in his work *Russia and Europe* (1869). However, what was special about Spengler's work was that it managed to draw together several characteristics of the modern crisis-consciousness, formulate them in a topical and grandiloquent fashion, as well as to point out many interesting analogies between

[158] See Gadamer 1986: 479.
[159] Spengler 1991: 36. My italics.

different world-historical cultures. After Spengler, for any historian trying to make sense of cultural development, it became a necessity to confront the biological and organic metaphors of growth and decay. It is namely this antithetical setting to the Spenglerian decline – what Husserl called the "latest theory of the weak-hearted philosophical scepticism"[160] – which ought to be recognized as the implicit background of Husserl's reflections on the European crisis.

Let me recapitulate Spengler's basic position. In his view, the traditional philosophies of history had come short in two crucial respects. First, by relying on either purely idealized or strictly mechanical concepts of history, the dominant interpretations had completely misinterpreted the basic character of cultural development. The historical positivists, who relied on the ideas of causal uniformity and measurability, had made history lifeless; the idealists were false optimists in their belief in a progressive teleology, or as in the case of Kant and Hegel, in some kind of divine providence or Theodicy.[161] According to Spengler, both had failed to recognize the essentially *dynamic* and *organic* character of historical development: cultures, like plants, are living organisms that aim at realizing a principle that is inherent to their existence. This dynamism could be grasped, not in scientific terms, but only with the help of artistic expression – or by what Spengler called the creative "work of genius".[162]

Secondly, in Spengler's view the traditional conceptions of history had been old-fashionably Ptolemaic in the sense that they had "revolved around" the European-Occidental culture; they gave this culture a privileged position in the world-history by interpreting it as the culmination or perfection of all historical civilizations.[163] What Spengler was after was indeed a "Copernican revolution" of historical development: all cultures follow the same pattern of organic growth, bloom and decease, and the Occidental culture makes no exception to this. In addition, all high cultures – Babylonian, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Mexican, Classical, Arabian

[160] "Der Untergang des Abendlandes, diese neueste Theorie eines schwachherzigen philosophischen Skeptizismus […]". HuaXXVII: 122.
[161] See Chapter 1.2.
[162] Spengler 1991: 360ff.
[163] In fact, Spengler argued that the whole notion of Europe should be "struck out" of world-history because of its broadness (1991: 12n1.).

– have their unique systems of expression (art, poetry, science) which cannot be settled into one overarching framework.

Let us focus on the first point. The most imminent consequence of Spengler's organic vision was of course his thesis on the *inevitability of the decline*. If cultures truly are organisms, it is their destiny – after they have realized their inherent essence – to descend into a process of withering and make way for new forms of life. In other words, all cultures are by necessity *finite* entities that all have their limited existence in the great cycle of life. To put it in Spengler's own decorative style, they are nothing but "ephemeral waves" in the great sea of world-history. Blending with one another, they rise to their peak just to experience a downfall.

It was namely this thesis of finitude that came to define Spengler's approach to the problematic of the crisis. Instead of regarding the European crisis as a transitional phase from one historical epoch to another – or as the Last Judgment of world-history – Spengler conceived it as a kind of "fatal disease" denoting the incipient "death-struggle" of culture.[164] This struggle is something that all cultures descend into by necessity without the possibility of prevailing through a voluntaristic renewal – for Spengler, the crisis was an irreversible process of destruction. Contrary to a common misconception, Spengler did not view the First World War as the closure of the European-Occidental culture as such, but rather as a fierce sign of the forthcoming decline. All in all, his notion of decline was by no means a sudden catastrophe but more like a process of erosion that, in the case of this culture, would reach its end in approximately 300 years.

According to Spengler, it was namely this struggle that had erupted within the European-Occidental culture in the course of the nineteenth century:

> We [Europeans] are now facing the last spiritual crisis that will involve all Europe and America. What its course will be, Late Hellenism tells us. The tyranny of reason – of which we are not conscious, for we are ourselves its apex – is in every culture an epoch between man and an old-man, and no more.[165]

What marks the final stage of culture – the period of spiritual crisis – is a process of transmutation into what Spengler calls *civilization*. In this stage

[164] Spengler 1991: 157.
[165] Spengler 1991: 221.

of maturity, the culture has moved from a living and productive expressivity into what he calls the "winter stage" – the stage of decay and beginning evaporation. In contrast to the vivacious springtime of a culture, the period of civilization is characterized by artificiality, soullessness, and the loss of true communality; instead of defining itself with regard to homeland, people and race, a civilization witnesses the rise of cosmopolitanism, the disappearance of national traditions and birth of rootless metropolises. True artistic expression is replaced by mass culture; earthly and concrete values ("values of blood") give way to abstract goods such as money. Politically speaking, this stage witnesses the emergence of imperialism, which Spengler sees as the "pure form of civilization". This, according to him, is exactly what happened to the Classical culture of the Greeks: "Greek soul and Roman intellect – this is how culture and civilization differ from each other"[166]. In the shape of imperial Rome, the Hellenic spirit lost its creativity and sensitiveness for beauty. Instead of true religiosity and cult the Roman Empire relied on *panem et circenses* (bread and circuses), instead of rootedness to a native soil, it wanted to conquer the earth.[167]

From the perspective of Husserl's crisis-thinking, it was perhaps the inherent anti-rationalism of Spengler's that came to serve as the single most important point of criticism. It was one of the guiding insights of Spengler's view of cultural development that periods of crises were not defined primarily by irrational outbursts, but on the contrary, by an emphatic tendency to *rationalization*. Instead of creative expressivity, a culture in the phase of civilization turns into a "cult of exact sciences, of dialectic, of demonstration, of causality"[168]. Spontaneity is smothered by control; philosophy and science stand no longer for creative and evocative thinking

[166] Spengler 1991: 25.

[167] The somewhat strict separation between the notions of *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* had been a central trait of the German self-understanding even well before Spengler. As Richard Wolin has shown, this distinction was first used by the German middle classes of the eighteenth century, who wanted to distance themselves from the superficially "civilized" aristocrats who were perceived to be lacking inner "cultivation" (Wolin 1990: 24ff.). Especially through the Napoleonic conquests, this distinction was established between the vitality of national traditions (primarily that of Germany) and the destructive levelling of imperial tendencies (of Britain and France), often labelled as "European". The organic metaphors of birth (Lat. *natio*; from the verb *nasci*, to grow) and nurturing (Lat. *colere*) that were attached to the ideas of nation and culture were often contrasted with the artificiality and soullessness of European civilization.

[168] Spengler 1991: 221.

but become mere organization and accumulation of facts. Philosophy, unable to fill the void that is left by the collapse of old order, becomes mere critique that eventually ends up in skepticism. This is what Spengler called the "tyranny of reason" characteristic of the period of civilization: a culture is capable only of imitating the greatness of the past, of producing the similar form again and again. "Finally", writes Spengler, "weary, reluctant, cold, it loses its desire to be, and as in Imperial Rome, wishes itself out of the overlong daylight and back in the darkness of proto-mysticism".[169] Insecure and mistrusting any technological, economic and scientific ideals, the masses begin to look for new meaning, which opens up a new space for religiosity. However, in this phase the organic development has reached its end: the old civilization either dissolves or is transformed into another culture.

Spengler was not in any case alone with his considerations. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there emerged a wide variety of critiques that treated the Western concept of reason as an untimely idea – as essentially narrow, even repressive definition of humanity. Wilhelm Dilthey, for one, attacked what he considered the lifeless, rational subject of Locke, Hume and Kant – a subject whose veins were not filled by "real blood, but rather the diluted juice of reason conceived as an empty faculty of mind"[170]. According to Dilthey, the modern idea of rational subjectivity was fundamentally inadequate in capturing the peculiar facticity of human experience – our embeddedness in the all-embracing life-nexus (*Lebenszusammenhang*) – but also the non-rational element belonging to it.[171] This Spenglerian idea was also formulated by one the most influential psychologists of the Weimar period, Richard Müller-Freienfels, for whom the basic framework for the "modern, rationally ordered life" was that of mechanism, of "machine-like existence"[172]. Despite these critiques were often dealt with under the title of *irrationalism*, we ought to avoid

[169] Spengler 1991: 75.

[170] "nicht wirkliches Blut, sondern der verdünnte Saft von Vernunft als blosser Denktätigkeit" (Dilthey 1979: xviii)

[171] The basic unit of this givenness is what Dilthey calls *Erlebnis* (lived experience), a pre-reflective experience of something as meaningful and immediately present. For Dilthey, lived experience was a broad concept that encompasses – not only our perceptions and sensory experiences – but also memories, instincts, passions, acts of volition and communication, aesthetical experiences and so on. Dilthey 1997: 43ff.

[172] Müller-Freienfels 1921: 274–275.

considering them as simply *antirational*. As Müller-Freienfels put it, our scientific concept of rationality had been formed by abstracting from the irrational "residual" of human cognition: reason was not to be destroyed but emancipated from the yoke of traditional logic which was suppressing the peculiar "vitality, personality and mystery" of human existence.[173]

Perhaps the most influential analyses on the concept of rationalization were conducted in the works of Max Weber. Weber – who became known for his thorough elaborations on the history of the capitalist system and its concomitants (such as his famous characterization of the Protestant work ethic) – defined the whole project of modernization in terms of an overarching rationalization that was realizing itself in different fields of culture: science, politics, economy and religion. For Weber, rationalization denoted basically the consistent organization of knowledge, which is comprised of three basic strands: control of worldly events, the systematization of meaning (religion, ethical principles) and the arrangement of life under rules and principles. Now, because this process had the tendency to eliminate those particular beliefs that do not fit into the formal system, the modern world had witnessed what Weber called the "elimination of magic" (*Entzauberung der Welt*)[174]; it had become controllable and lost its enigmatic character. For Weber, this was what he called the "crisis of modernity": the dissolution of traditional meaning and value.

However, as Weber described in his lectures on world history, the process of rationalization was a more complex phenomenon than one would think in the first place:

> For in all the above cases it is a question of the specific and peculiar rationalism of Western culture. Now by this term very different things may be understood [...] There is, for example, rationalization of mystical contemplation, that is of an attitude which, viewed from other departments of life, is specifically irrational, just as much as there are rationalizations of economic life, of technique, of scientific research, of military training, of law and administration. Furthermore, each one of these fields may be rationalized in terms of very different ultimate values and ends, and what is rational from one point of view may well be irrational from another.

[173] Müller-Freienfels 1922: 5, 15.
[174] Weber 1997: 71.

> Hence rationalizations of the most varied character have existed in various spheres of life and in all areas of culture.[175]

As Weber observed, the urge to organize and control the different cultural phenomena had not made the world simply more reasonable or comprehensible. On the contrary, the growing specialization in different fields of culture had actually led into the co-existence of several competing and conflicting rational paradigms. Thus from the viewpoint of highly rationalized economic observation, ascetic religious life may seem quite irrational; however, the same goes the other way around. According to Weber, this process was due to the especially *formal* character of modern rationality: instead of defining itself with regard to substantive content, modern rationality was characterized by power-relations and systems of control. Accordingly, irrationalism did not result from a mere lack of reason, but it was born as a necessary by-product of modern rationalism – as the imminent consequence of the *incongruence between different forms of rationality*. Reason was no longer unified but dispersed – and it was exactly this dispersion that served as one of the key points of departure for Husserl's analysis of the crisis (Ch. 1.4).

Crisis of relativism

As I mentioned in passing, one of the central motives of Spengler's project was what he called a "Copernican revolution" of world history. In opposition to the classical idea of universal history, which had mostly concentrated around the European-Occidental culture, Spengler conceived the world history as a process of conflicting and competing cultures. All great world-historical cultures have their unique souls and form-languages which define their existence and accomplishments. For instance, the Classical spirit was by its nature "Apollonian" – defined by appreciation for pure forms and the present moment – whereas the Western spirit is in its essence "Faustian", that is, directed towards future, striving beyond its present spiritual accomplishments. According to Spengler, the peculiar character of a culture was expressed in its "prime symbol", by which he

[175] Weber 1997: xxxviii.

meant a kind of common denominator that unifies the different branches of culture. In the Western culture this prime symbol was to be found in "pure and limitless space": the accomplishments of the Western culture were defined, above all, by a sense of infinity (in the modern natural science, space and time are infinite; in the Christian faith the God is given an infinite character).

What is noteworthy from our vantage point is the philosophical conclusion of this position. For Spengler claimed that not only are the particular form-languages different from each other but they are also irreconcilable in a pregnant sense. Each culture has its own way of expressing, organizing and explaining the world, and although the different frameworks are not totally incomprehensible with regard to each other, they are still essentially incommensurable with one another. "What is lacking to the Western thinker, the very thinker in whom we might have expected to find it", writes Spengler, "is the insight into the historically relative character of his data [...] the conviction that his unshakable truths and eternal views are true simply for him and him only"[176]. Even though the modern European-Occidental culture was the one and only culture which had been able to develop a somewhat highly refined historical sense, it had not been able to radicalize this view up to the point of forthright *relativism*, i.e. the idea that truth is always that of a certain historical periods. For Spengler, this thesis on relativity did not concern merely aesthetic products (sculpture, painting, poetry, architecture), but also those scientific accomplishments which we usually consider as defined by absolute and universal principles. For instance, every culture has its own mathematics whose character is solely dependent on the culture in which it is rooted:

> There is not, and cannot be, number as such. There are several number-worlds, as there are several cultures. We find an Indian, an Arabian, a Classical, a Western type of mathematical thought and a type of number. [...] Consequently, there are more mathematics than one. [...] The style of any mathematic which comes into being depends wholly on the culture in which it is rooted; the sort of mankind it is that ponders it.[177]

Accordingly, this form of radical anti-universalism concerned also the very science which was supposed to deal with the absolute principles of real-

[176] Spengler 1991: 18.
[177] Spengler 1991: 59.

ity itself: philosophy. "There are no eternal truths", writes Spengler, "for every philosophy is merely an expression of its time".[178] Philosophy – like all other branches of culture – is an accomplishment that can be found in all high cultures, and accordingly, it is bound to the contingencies of their particular form-languages. Whereas Hegel could still hold on to the unity of philosophy through the teleological structure of objective spirit, for Spengler, this idea of a single historical narrative turned out to be groundless. For him, philosophy did not bear within itself any supratemporal significance, for it is essentially nothing else but expression of its respective *world-view* (*Weltanschauung*).

Even before Spengler, the division between *Wissenschaft* and *Weltanschauung* had become one of the key topics of the German academic philosophy. The growing tensions between natural and human sciences at the end of the nineteenth century had led to the so-called "controversy over method" (*Methodenstreit*) motivated especially through the succession of the naturalistic or positivistic sciences.[179] This controversy was reflected also in the field of philosophy, in which it often denoted two conflicting views of philosophical undertaking: philosophy as a pursuit for universal truths, and philosophy as an expression of one's spiritual-historical situation. Even though the notion of *Weltanschauung* did not originally relate to any particularly "relativist" conception of philosophy – it was first used by Kant to describe the apperceptive unity of world in perception – at the turn of the century it nevertheless turned into a certain antipode of universal philosophy. This was mostly due to the meaning coined to it by Wilhelm Dilthey, Max Scheler and Karl Jaspers, who all linked the concept of world-view to the arising historical consciousness of modernity. Although history – as it emerged during the nineteenth century German academia – wanted to present itself as rigorous *Wissenschaft*, it seemed that the tapering conceptuality of the modern natural sciences could not account for the unique characteristics of historical investigation. Dilthey, for one, rejected the idea of causal explanation as the basic principle of historical research, which was supposed to proceed through interpretation.

Let me briefly focus on this development. Within the philosophical discourse of the early twentieth century, perhaps the most common term

[178] Spengler 1991: 31.
[179] See e.g. Bambach 1995: 58ff.

that was used to describe this idea of the incommensurability of different historical frameworks was that of *historicism* (*Historismus*).[180] In the context of German philosophy, this notion appeared for the first time at the end of the eighteenth century in Friedrich Schlegel who used it in a rather positive sense to denote the idea of *historical sensitivity*. Drawing back to "Winckelmann's *Historismus*", Schlegel wanted to accentuate the idea that, especially in art critique, one should always pay attention to the historical circumstances in order to avoid loose anachronism: the accomplishments of Greek art, for instance, should not be assessed in modern standards.[181] However, at the beginning of the twentieth century – and especially through the works of Husserl, Windelband and Rickert – historicism became to denote primarily a position of historical relativism: the idea that all knowledge is historically determined, and that there is no way to overcome the contingencies of a certain historical period. Arthur Liebert, for one, saw the root of the modern crisis precisely in "the fatal historical skepticism and relativism nourished by historicism"[182]. Thus historicism seemed to go hand in hand with the idea of philosophy as a world-view: philosophy ought to be seen primarily as an articulation of its respective spiritual-historical situation.

Still, we should not exaggerate the popularity of this stance. As Herbert Schnädelbach has put it in his German history, although the term historicism itself dates back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it first came into general use around the beginning of the twentieth century, however, not as a particularly celebrated term. "Like most -isms", Schnädelbach writes, "[historicism] was first use to denounce – it signified something to be overcome, something which was in *crisis*, something outmoded."[183] Through works such as Ernst Troeltsch's *Die Krisis der Historismus* (1922), historicism itself was presented as a bygone movement; indeed, many of the alleged historicists appeared as such only in their opponents' works. For instance, Dilthey opposed fiercely Husserl's characterization of him as a historicist in the sense of a supporter of historical relativism. "The knife of historical relativism," Dilthey wrote, "which has

[180] On the development of historicism in the late 19th and early 20th century German philosophy, see Schnädelback 1984; Bambach 1995.
[181] Schlegel 1981: xvi, 35–41.
[182] Liebert 1923: 7.
[183] Schnädelbach 1984: 34.

wounded all metaphysics and religion, must also bring with it a healing touch."[184] The key thesis of Dilthey's late *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* was that the constitution of different world-views could well be adapted in the framework of universalistic epistemology.

Thus, it is possible to differentiate between two articulations of the crisis of relativism. First of all, as a result to the development of the late nineteenth century, there emerged a novel question that concerned the very possibility of absolute and universal knowledge and the mode of thinking which was supposed to provide its conditions of possibility, namely, *metaphysics* understood as *universal transcendental philosophy*. This tendency was not only due to the historicist critique but also to the influential positivist stances that either dismissed the very possibility of "first philosophy" or at least rejected the idea of its attainment in the framework of speculative idealism. The void that was left behind by traditional metaphysics was not a mere philosophical problem, but it was widely debated by several cultural critics – such as C.G. Jung who renounced the idea that "the modern man has lost all the metaphysical certainties of his medieval brother [...] everything becomes relative and therefore doubtful".[185] Secondly, although closely linked to the first sense, there emerged a more particular debate concerning those ideals and forms of knowledge that had been essential to the European-Occidental philosophy. Especially through the growing sensitivity towards the non-European intellectual traditions, there arose a doubt whether the European sciences as such bore within itself any universal significance – or, whether the ideas and ideals articulated in this tradition could be explained by a historical contextualization, deriving them from purely empirical or "material" conditions. As Troeltsch argued, historicism was committed to, not only to the idea of historical contingency of all knowledge, but perhaps more importantly, to the societal relativity (*gesellschaftlichen Bedingtheit*) of all spiritual-cultural phenomena.[186] As I will argue in part 1.4, this broadened critique of historicism in the sense of cultural relativism was also important part of Husserl's reflections on the European crisis.

[184] Dilthey 1960: 232. See Bambach 1995: 127.
[185] Jung 1933: 204, 211.
[186] Troeltsch 2002: 437ff.

Crisis and Decisionism

Let me briefly pay attention to yet one important feature in the early twentieth-century discussion on crisis. As I showed in the previous chapter (1.2.), one of the fundamental transitions that took place through the philosophical-historical discussion of the eighteenth century, was that the "crisis" turned from a purely descriptive notion into a *prognostic* one. This notion was used to denote incipient anticipation and expectation, which gave it a novel temporal stretch: crises were historical events that presume a certain understanding of the past, but their primary orientation was to be found in the *future*. Because of their essentially "open" character, crises seemed to pave way for the attitude of a doctor, that is, for a certain active element on behalf of the interpreter of the crisis. According to this line of thought, crises demand intervention: they are to be actively recognized, wrestled and resolved in one way or another.

The idea of crisis as a prognostic category increased substantially among the German intelligentsia of the early twentieth-century. One of the unique features of this development was that the concept was now even more attached to lexicon derived from military context – it was coined with notions such as battle (*Kampf*), power (*Macht*) and decision (*Entscheidung*) – which strengthened the latent *agonistic* implications of this notion. As in the case of Scheler's pre-war manifesto, crisis was used to anticipate the impending struggle of Germany for its existence, the critical solution between its demise or revival. For Scheler and many others, crisis was no longer a passive condition of culture but rather, it connoted a somewhat explicit *imperative* to act – a calling to engage into a struggle in order to resolve the crisis. Despite the somewhat unequivocal defeat that Germany suffered in the WWI, this talk did not end with the war; on the contrary, the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a new emergence of this agonistic interpretation of crisis. Especially in the writings of the National Socialist philosophers, 'crisis' was frequently employed to denote the new impending struggle for the true identity of Germany.

This transformation in the use of the concept of crisis reflected the overall trend of the political theory and constitutional thought of the Weimar period (1919–1933), which was completely permeated by militarily concepts such as of combat, battle, enmity and conflict. Against Carl von

Clausewitz's notorious definition of "war as the continuation of politics by other means", politics was now defined as "the continuation of warfare"– a phrase that was formulated by several political philosophers including Spengler, Jünger and Hermann Heller.[187] However, the Weimar period also strengthened the tendency to read the lexicon of crisis, struggle and conflict, not primarily as mundane events, but as fundamental metaphysical categories – or respectively, as deep (subconscious) forces of the human psyche. The first tendency was articulated already by Nietzsche who considered the idea of struggle as an inherent feature of all striving for truth – as something that was already as an inherent feature of Greek philosophy.[188] For Nietzsche, "all happening, all movement all becoming [...] is to be perceived as a struggle (*Kampf*)"[189] – the basic principle of this struggle was, of course, what he called the "will to power" (*Wille zur Macht*). The more psychological reading of struggle was put forward by Jünger who in his *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis* argued that particularly in war human being is in contact with his original thrives and instincts. Echoing Heraclitus' fragment (DK B80) on conflict (*polemos*) being "common to all", Jünger argued that "[i]t is war that has made human beings and their age what they are [...] War, father of all thinks, is also ours; he has hammered us, chiseled and tempered us into what we are [...]."[190] By revoking the original thrive to survive as well as the fundamental division of good and bad, Jünger saw war as fleshing out the *Urmensch* in us.

On a more general level, this transition in the concept of crisis mirrored the overall philosophical development in which history itself seemed to move from mere factual description to the *sphere of will*. In the spirit of Nietzsche's "critical history", it was often asserted that the amenity of history can be decided only from the perspective of the present – history ought to serve life, and thus it is justified to read it in a way that serves this goal. "In this elementary sense, history is a matter of 'freedom', not of 'necessity'", Paul Natorp wrote in 1918, "[it is] a matter of willing, not

[187] This idea of politics as a continuation of warfare ("Fortsetzung des Krieges mit veränderten Mitteln") was first articulated by Jünger in his essay "Unsere Politiker" (1925). See Jünger 2001: 64. On the metaphors of warfare and conflict in the context of Weimar politics, see Pankakoski 2010.
[188] KSA 6.71
[189] KSA 6.2, 49.
[190] Jünger 1980: 9ff.

blind obligation; matter of fact: matter of doing, not of being done; of life, not of being lived."[191] As it should be clear, crisis was more than eligible category to serve this purpose, a simple tool to render the past and the present into the form of clear opposition: life or death. Crisis was namely that moment of decision that urges to resolve this opposition.

Perhaps the most extensive and influential analysis on this relation between crisis and decision was provided by Carl Schmitt who first introduced the notion of *Dezisionismus* – the assertion of power by the means of radical intervention – to the academic debate.[192] Schmitt conducted his reflections in a series of works in the 1920s – out of which the most eminence gained two lengthy essays *Politische Thelogie* (1922) and *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1927) – that culminated in Schmitt's major work *Verfassungslehre* (1928) that dealt with the problematic of Weimar constitution. Even though these works covered of a wide variety of problems within the scope of political ontology, Schmitt's main framework remained that of legal theory – especially the question between law and political sovereignty. This relation, argued Schmitt, had been neglected by the liberal tradition which presented itself as having surmounted the problems of despotic rule. However, in the light of actual political conditions, the constitutional rules of modern nation-states had not consumed the problematic character of sovereign power. On the contrary, the constant dismissal of constitutional law for the sake of the crisis – understood as a state of exception – had revealed the importance to question the genuine character of sovereign power.

Schmitt's position was established in relation to the influential positivist and normativist theories of justice that emphasized the autonomous character of all norm-systems. According to Hans Kelsen, one of the most eminent legal philosophers of the early twentieth century, a legal system should be understood as analogical to the facts of nature – as functioning according to causal laws that can be derived from a few basic axioms. In the heart of Kelsen's considerations was the idea of a *Grundnorm*, which for him denotes the original "ideal norm" regulating and justifying all particular legal systems – and thus providing the perquisites for any political or-

[191] Natorp 1918: 7.
[192] First appearance of the word decisionism can be found in Schmitt's preface to his work *Die Diktatur* (1928), originally published in 1921. See Wolin 1990: 179.

der.[193] Accordingly in Kelsen's model, there was no real incongruence between the legal system and the state: the actions of sovereign are justified insofar as he functions in accordance with the constitutional law, which in turn is founded on the ideal ground-norm. Schmitt, on his part, found this position to be in conflict with not only the political reality, but with the origin of sovereignty as such. Following Hobbes on the idea that the whole justification of political power drives its force from the collective decision of individuals to submit themselves to the will of the sovereign, Schimtt argued that the "raw material" of politics was that of "the people" (*Volk*); however, without the form-giving function of the sovereign power, this material remains numb and idle. Referring often to the Hobbesian principle *autoritas non veritas facit legem* ("Authority, not truth, is the basis for legitimacy"), Schmitt argued that it was namely the act of sovereign that founds the legal system and holds it together; without this political power, no system of norms can justify itself.[194]

What, then, constitutes the essence of the sovereign? Schmitt's answer was simple: *decision*. Or more precisely, the ability to *decide on a state of crisis*: "Sovereign is the one who decides on the state of exception."[195] The ultimate foundation of all political order is to be found in law but the *act of the sovereign*, which, however, does not lead simply to arbitrariness. Schmitt held that for a legal order to make sense, a certain normal situation – legal order based on constitution – must be presupposed, but "it is sovereign who definitely decides whether this normal situation actually exists"[196]. For Schmitt, sovereign's recourse to exception does not entail chaos but on the contrary, it ought to be understood as a proof of the vitality of political order. In other words, a certain political whole – for instance, a nation-state – is in contact with its essence at the very moment when it is able to repudiate the legal order for the sake of a sovereign will. At the moment of unilateral and autonomous decision, the body politic comes alive. However, this does not mean that Schmitt would have come up with arguments for the state of emergency decree that enabled the National Socialists to take power in 1933; as he often accentuated, exception should never become the rule itself. Even so, his key thesis was that the

[193] See Kelsen 1934.
[194] Schmitt 1985: 33.
[195] Wolin 1990: 38.
[196] Schmitt 1985: 13.

ultimate foundation of poli-tical community was neither "co-operative" nor "natural", but *decisionistic*.

It is exactly in Schmitt that we find the most radical conclusion to the political crisis of modernity as the loss of natural human sociality. As Schmitt argued in *The Concept of the Political*, "all genuine political theories presuppose man to be evil"[197] – and the neglecting of this idea would only amount to the dismissal of the essential struggle-like character of the political domain. Politics is not about agreement – not even in the very general level of "social contract" – but it unfolds only as a perpetual struggle for power, and the periodic abatement of this struggle through the emergence of sovereignty.

Schmitt's idea of decisionism had both divine and earthly elements. As the title of Schmitt's book *Politische Theologie* indicates, the primary framework for his vision of political order was to be found in theology – according to the key thesis of the work, all political concepts should be understood as secularized theological notions. In particular, the figure of the sovereign was to be understood as analogical to God in Christian theology: sovereign is the one who ultimately decides on right and wrong, and is able to make a "divine intervention" with regard to the established order. However, in Schmitt's decisionistic model there was also a certain vitalist motive, which presented the "state of exception" as the core of all organic life: "In the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of mechanism that has become torpid by repetition"[198]. Echoing Spengler's organic metaphors, Schmitt saw that the idea of strong sovereignty was also reflecting the latent force of life repressed by cultural factors. (This idea has been further developed by, for instance, Jacques Derrida in his analyses on the relation between bestiality and sovereignty).

Thus it is understandable that Schmitt's position was echoed in the writings of the National Socialist philosophers. In the writings of Alfred Bäumeler and Alfred Rosenberg the notion of a crisis (in the sense of "historical decision") was constantly employed to justify the extremely centralist model of governance and its fundamental prerogative to break loose from the confines of the established legal framework. [199] The ability to

[197] Schmitt 1985: 61.
[198] Schmitt 1985: 15.
[199] As Alfred Bäumler put it, the liberal idea of state as such was a fundamentally un-Germanic idea – something that the Anglo-French axis had falsely imposed to the German

rise above the law – what we nowadays would consider as dictatorship – was indeed treated as both divine and organic gesture. Crisis was a divine event because it was materialized in the *Führer*; it was profane because it reflected the organic essence of the elemental *Volk*. (This was also the view of Spengler, for whom democracy was essentially a political model of the civilization period – culture, at the highest point of its organic development, was defined by either monarchic or aristocratic rule.[200])

Although the political implications of Husserl's phenomenology – if we can speak of such – pointed towards another, more cosmopolitan direction, it is well possible to point towards a certain *decisionistic* element in his theory of the crisis. As I will argue in the following chapter (1.4), Husserl's reflections on the ownmost character of human rationality was founded on his commitment to the essentially *voluntaristic* and *self-responsible* character of this idea – against the blind and instinctive character of animal life, Husserl defined the human existence in terms of structural capability to inspect one's own life as a totality, i.e. to act according to norms that are legitimated in regard to the total perspective of one's own existence. As Husserl emphasized, this reflexivity could only be entertained on the basis of a perpetual critique, which has its horizon in the pregiven horizon of traditionality and its norms – being responsible entails a necessary relation to the acquired contents of meaning and sense.[201] In this regard, the "crisis" was understood as that point of rupture, in which the groundlessness or "emptiness" of our beliefs, values or norms comes about: it was the the point which motivates the decision concerning our commitment to the tradition we live by. In this sense, the idea of crisis acquired for itself an inextricably positive sense, which related itself to the motive of decision: the crisis is what motivates the process of renewal on the basis of an established tradition. Even the imminent crisis of philosophical reflection, brought about the dispersion of rationality, was to be rearticulated in regard to a historical decision, which can open up a horizon of future development. "It is the fate of the philosophical modern age", writes Husserl,

people. Bäumler 1934: 5.

[200] See esp. Spengler 1991: 360ff.

[201] On autonomy as *Willensentschiedenheit*, see HuaVI: 272

> that it has first to seek out, in the course of a gradual self-disclosure motivated by new struggles (*Kämpfen*), the definitive idea of philosophy, its true matter and its true method; it has first to discover the genuine enigmas of the world and bring them in to the trail of decision (*Entscheidung*).[202]

From this perspective, I believe, it is possible to point towards a motive of *philosophical* decisionism in the works of late Husserl.[203] Not only was it the task of philosophical reflection to grasp the current demise of reason, but it was supposed to open up a novel horizon of action that could have pointed towards the renewing potential of philosophical reason.

1.4. The Idea of European Crisis in Husserl's Late Works

In the framework of 20th century phenomenology, the concept of crisis is best known from Husserl's late works. The word appears in numerous texts of Husserl's, most notably, in the title of his last major work: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. In different kinds of philosophical and intellectual-historical overviews of the 20th century, it is also quite usual to find a description of Husserl as *the* philosopher – or even the prophet – of the European crisis. Husserl is usually seen as a thinker, who, on the one hand, *defined* the state of Europe with the notion of crisis, and on the other hand, *led this crisis back* into the mis-

[202] The full quote: "In dieser hält sie sich für berufen, eine neue Zeit anzufangen, ihrer Idee der Philosophie und wahren Methode völlig sicher; sicher auch, durch ihren Radikalismus des neuen Anfangens alle bisherigen Naivitäten und so alle Skepsis überwunden zu haben. Aber unvermerkt mit eigenen Naivitäter, behaftet, ist es ihr Schicksal, auf dem Wege einer allmählichen, in neuen Kämpfen motivierten Selbstenthüllung die endgültige Idee der Philosophie, ihr wahres Thema, ihre wahre Methode allererst suchen, allererst die echten Welträtsel entdecken und auf die Bahn der Entscheidung bringen zu müssen." HuaVI: 12. See also Dodd 2004: 2.

[203] Actually, in his lectures on passive synthesis, Husserl saw it as one of the main constituents of our conscious life: our experience, which is essentially futural by character and thus directed towards the anticipation of empty horizons, is internally directed towards making a decision with regard to the new intuitive content. This ability of deciding "in-favor-of" of "against" is at the very core of the establishment of judgment (*Urteil*). HuaXI: 36–39; 52–53.

interpretation of scientific rationality – or more generally, in science's loss of meaning for life.

This common understanding of crisis, although correct in many respects, seems to suffer from at least two important omissions. First, even though the notion itself appears for the most part only in the Husserl's later works, it is actually quite possible to see it as a kind of leading clue for Husserl's whole philosophical project. As many critics – such as Roman Ingarden, Tom Rockmore, James C. Morrison and Dermot Moran[204] – have argued, Husserl's late works on the crisis should actually be seen as the culmination point of his lifelong project: the struggle with naturalism and physicalism, the overcoming of the inner dissolution of science and the return to concrete world-experience. Reinhold Smid, the editor of Husserliana volume 29, has also accentuated the central role of the topics of Europe and scientific autonomy – often regarded as Husserl's mature interests – already in his work of the 1920s.[205] Thus one can rightfully ask whether Husserl's late reflections on crisis actually contribute anything substantially new to his philosophical project.

Secondly, it is often overlooked that despite the central position that the concept of crisis employed in Husserl's last works, he seemed to have a reserved relation to it. For instance, in his Prague lecture in November 1935 – which later came to serve as the basis for the opening chapter of the *Crisis* – Husserl asked straightforwardly whether the popular debate on crisis could be taken seriously at all.[206] Extremely concerned of the current development of scientific and the more general political atmosphere – especially the rise of National Socialism – Husserl nevertheless presented himself as *vermeintliche Reaktionär* to the debate on crisis, not

[204] Within the existing Husserl scholarship, a wide debate has been established concerning the "new approach" of Husserl's *Crisis*-work with regard to his earlier philosophy. Following Husserl's own emphasis on the novel historical dimension of phenomenology, Husserl's later works have been interpreted as departures or breaks in regard to his the earlier transcendental philosophy – an idea that was perhaps first articulated by Merleau-Ponty (1962: 58n1). David Carr sees the novelty of *Crisis* in Husserl's growing interest in the problematic of historicity: in contrast to the more systematic approach of the early Husserl, in his later work the historical considerations are seen, not only as mere contextualization, but as a necessary starting-point for phenomenology (Carr 1987: 74). Ingarden, in his turn, has argued that the novel approach of *Crisis* ought to be explained in terms of a different, wider audience that Husserl wished to address (1972: 22). See also Rockmore 1984: 247; Morrison 1977; Moran 2000.

[205] See also Reinhold Smid's introduction to HuaXXIX: xiii.

[206] HuaXXIX: 103

only in the sense of a philosophical conservative, but also as someone who takes a critical stance towards the popular debate.[207] "Is not this talk [i.e. the crisis of science] heard so often these days, an exaggeration?"[208] Husserl asks in the opening pages of the *Crisis*. It seems obvious that he did not want to escalate the popular day-to-day but to "root out the popular misunderstandings"[209] concerning it, take up the challenge that the crisis-talk had set forth.

Are these stances reconcilable with one another? Is it possible to see the "crisis" as a defining topic of Husserl's lifelong project – and at the same time, adhere to Husserl's explicit distancing from the debate on crisis? I would like to answer affirmatively. It is my argument that the problematic of crisis ought to be seen as a kind of leading clue for Husserl's whole philosophical project; however, it is well justified to assert that through his *reactive* position with the twentieth-century debate on crisis, Husserl deepened as well as broadened his position in order to tackle some of the basic presuppositions of this debate, and to formulate his own position anew. Thus, in order to grasp the specific character of his later work, especially the problematic of culture and community, we need to situate it into the context of the crisis-debate of modernity.

It is actually quite often overlooked that especially in Husserl's later texts and manuscripts, the notion of crisis appears in connection to *Europe*. Husserl speaks of the crisis of the *European* humanity, of the *European* sciences and also simply of the crisis of *Europe*. In this chapter, I would like to argue that this is by no means a sheer coincidence. The thematic of crisis in Husserl's work is intimidately tied to the problematic of Europe at least in two respects. First of all, as I argued in the previous chapters, the crisis was a characteristically European topic in the sense that it seemed to permeate the whole of the European nations. Europe or the European tradition – and not merely Germany or France – was the genuine "subject" of the crisis, that which had descended into a state of confusion and despair. Even more importantly, Husserl interpreted the crisis as something which concerned the founding idea of the European tradition, namely, the motive of universal reason as the guiding principle of cultural development. Instead of a mere regional dissolution of an individual discipline (for in

[207] HuaVI: 337.
[208] "Ist diese heutzutage vielgehörte Rede nicht eine Übertreibung?" HuaVI: 1.
[209] HuaVI: 317.

stance, a crisis of logic or scientific psychology), the crisis penetrated into the very founding ideas of reason and human sociality. In this regard, the crisis appeared, not as a mere possibility of cultural obliteration (e.g. the Rousseauan extinction of European political institutions), but as a more profound and thoroughgoing setback of rational culture. Nevertheless, instead of simply refuting the crisis as a cultural phenomenon, I argue, Husserl aimed at a radical rearticulation of this idea – one, that could have accounted for the inevitable yet productive role of crises of meaning.

The topic of crisis in Husserl's work

The concept of crisis found its way into Husserl's vocabulary through a series of reflections, which received their original spark around the halfway of the 1930s. Before that, the word appears only in passing, for instance, in connection to the so-called "foundational crises" of special sciences.[210] The story behind the emergence of the notion is pretty well documented. Following the invitation to the annual International Congress of Philosophy at Prague in 1934, titled as "Crisis of Democracy", Husserl was urged to reflect upon the problematic of "European crisis" and the "contemporary task of philosophy" linked to it.[211] Out of these reflections evolved three important texts: firstly, the original Prague text "Über die gegenwärtigen Aufgabe der Philosophie" written in 1934; secondly, a lecture given to the Vienna *Kulturbund* in May 1935, "Die Krisis der europäischen Menschentums und die Philosophie"; and thirdly, "Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die Psychologie", a presentation delivered in Prague, November 1935. These three texts served as a foundation for what came to be Husserl's last contribution: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. This work, published in the *Phänomenologische Jahrbuch* of 1936, was only partially finished: as Eugen Fink's outline of the work shows, Husserl had planned the *Crisis* to consist of five different sec-

[210] See for instance, HuaIX: 297.
[211] This lecture "Über die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie" is included in the volume 27 of Husserliana, see HuaXXVII: 184ff.

tions, out of which only three were published (and Husserl was somewhat unsatisfied with the third part).[212]

Of course, the topics of these writings – the dissolution of scientific rationality, the historical character of philosophy, and cultural renewal – had already been discussed in a series of texts and essays since the early 1910s. One way of capturing the guiding idea of Husserl's earlier critical reflections is to say that they were a response to an all-encompassing "crisis" of reason whose basic character he articulated, for instance, in the 1911 programmatic essay "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science" (*Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft).*[213] First, as a consequence to physicalist and naturalist approaches, our scientific rationality was defined by what Husserl calls "false objectivism": the absolutization of nature or natural-scientific abstractions. In their progress, modern natural sciences rely on a certain omission that concerns their foundations; by operating with scientific abstractions such as "atom" or "synapse", they have a tendency to forget the concrete experience that forms their origin. Conversely, the second sense of the crisis could be described as "false subjectivism", for in Husserl's view, a considerable part of modern philosophy was in the process of abandoning the whole idea of science as a rational pursuit of necessary and all-embracing truths – this for the sake of subjective preferences. According to Husserl, philosophy and science were succumbing into an unfounded relativism, most importantly, to the historicist idea that there are no truths that would transcend their respective cultural frameworks, and would thus be valid in every possible condition.[214]

Thus there exists a certain analogy between these false forms of rationality. Both share a similar feature of *absolutising a position that is fundamentally relative*. Both fail to see the limitedness of their perspectives and thus fall victim to hasty reductionism: "Whereas the natural scientist sees everything as nature", claims Husserl, "the humanistic scientist sees everything as spirit, as historical creation"[215]. This one-sidedness is what Husserl

[212] For the Fink-outline, see HuaVI: 514–516. See also Carr's introduction to *Crisis* (1970). Cf. Steinbock 1994b.
[213] HuaXXV: 3ff.
[214] HuaXXV: 41ff. See also HuaXXVII: 251. See also HuaVI, 385–386.
[215] The full quote: "Den herrschenden Auffassungsgewohnheiten entsprechend neigt eben der Naturwissenschaftler dazu, alles als Natur, der Geisteswissenschaftler als Geist, als historisches Gebilde anzusehen und demgemäß, was so nicht angesehen werden kann, zu mißdeuten." Hua XXV: 8. On the idea of crisis as a "cutting off", see Buckley 1990: 25.

often refers to as *naivety*.[216] This term, which primarily bears no negative content, simply denotes the human tendency to take beings as they are given to us, to believe and "trust" in the world around us without any explicitly critical or reflexive stance. It is *natural* in the sense that it we have grown (Lat. *nasci*) into it and continue to take it for granted.[217] Thus the specific naivety of our scientific endeavor is thus in the fact that we have a tendency to cling to those abstractions and conceptualizations which are most imminent to us, and avoid the question of their origin.[218]

Now, as Husserl occasionally remarks, there is actually nothing malign with this naivety and one-sidedness. Since science is an infinite domain of tasks, all concrete attempts to disclose a part of this domain actually take place within a limited scope. Abstraction from the given, whether mathematical or simply linguistic, belongs necessarily to all development of sense – and without a certain technization, the natural sciences could not execute their task.[219] Thus Philip J. Buckley hits the nail on the head by asking, is there not "an implicit inevitability to the forgetfulness which Husserl so hopes to overcome?"[220] In other words, is not the crisis of reason which Husserl so passionately seeks to resolve a necessary point of departure for phenomenology?

I think that in order to understand the core of Husserl's concept of crisis, we must differentiate between two senses of naivety, which I would like to describe here as *necessary* and *radical*. Even though Husserl sometimes speaks of "transcendental naivety"[221] that concerns all objectivistic philosophy from Galileo to modern forms of physicalism and naturalism, we can also point towards a crucial difference that distinguishes the contemporary scientific rationality from the philosophy of the early modernity. Through the modern physicalist naturalism, the false objectivism of the early modern philosophers turned into a more severe "hostility of spirit" (*Geistfeindschaft*)[222], which, as Buckley puts it, appeared as the pos-

[216] See e.g. HuaIII: 87–89.
[217] Especially in the Crisis-period, Husserl often uses the expression "natural naivety" (*natürlichen Naivität*), see HuaVI: 442; HuaXXVII: 218; HuaXXIX: 155.
[218] Hua VI: 342–343. Especially Philip J. Buckley has stressed the idea of forgetfulness (*Vergessenheit*) with regard to Husserl's analysis of the crisis. See Buckley 1992: 80–91.
[219] HuaVI: 45ff., Cf. HuaXXVII: 209.
[220] Buckley 1992: xx. Cf. Buckley 1998: 43.
[221] HuaVI: 196
[222] HuaVI: 347.

sibility of a "total, irrevocable, uncontrollable loss of meaning".[223] Thus, instead of a structural crisis of meaning characteristic of the development of all scientific activity, the crisis of naturalism appeared as a possibility of a "permanent defeat" – a defeat analogical to the novel sense of the crisis introduced by the World War I (cf. 1.3).

Let me sketch the aforementioned difference in detail. Within the framework of the *Crisis*, Husserl attributes what he calls "necessary naivety" primarily to Galileo, Descartes and to some extent to the rationalism of the Enlightenment (especially to Hume and Kant). In the second part of the *Crisis*, Husserl discussed Galileo as the leading figure of the modern natural sciences, whose "primal establishment" (*Urstiftung*) consists of the mathematization of sensible nature. However, this exact idealization of the real world included a certain "fateful omission" (*verhängnisvolles Versäumnis*)[224], for Galileo did not question his ideal of exactness, but he was forced to abstract from the inexact, spiritual characteristics of the human lifeworld. Galileo did not fully investigate into the origins of his mathematization; but took "for true being what is actually a method."[225] Galileo took mathematics to be "The Book of Nature"; what he did not appreciate was the fact *it is we who write it*, we who distance ourselves from the concrete life-world experience and furnish it with "a garb of ideas" (*Ideenkleid*).

However, the essential naivety that Husserl ascribed to all of the great modern thinkers – Descartes, Hume and Kant – did not yet amount to an all-embracing crisis of philosophical rationality.[226] What constituted the peculiar character of late nineteenth-century positivism and naturalism was not merely their one-sidedness but the fact that they were an *explicit attack on the idea of humanity as a domain of reason*. These stances were dangerous for the simple reason that they were an attack on the autonomy of our spiritual life: they were undermining the very idea of rational ground

[223] Buckley 1992: 131. We find this idea echoed in Heidegger's 1935 lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* (*Einführung in die Metaphysik*): "The spiritual decline of the earth has progressed so far that people are in danger of losing their last spiritual strength, the strength that makes it possible even to see the decline". Heidegger, GA 40, 29.

[224] HuaVI: 49.

[225] "Das Ideenkleid macht es, daß wir für wahres Sein nehmen, was eine Methode ist […]" HuaVI: 52.

[226] Husserl speaks of an "**einer absolut notwendigen Einseitigkeit" characteristic of the** essence of reason and its unfolding in the infinite task of philosophy. HuaVI: 338.

ing and behavior as a realm of self-sufficient or uncompelled activity. This attack was clear, for example, in behaviorist psychology which, to use John B. Watson's expression, recognized no essential difference between "a man and a brute"[227]. The same could have been said about B.F. Skinner's radical determinism, which proclaimed the non-freedom to be single most important point of departure for any scientific account on the human being.[228] Thus, whereas Descartes and the rationalism of the Enlightenment still had faith on the traditional idea of man as rational animal, that is, an essentially voluntaristic and self-responsible being, for the philosophy of the nineteenth century this fundamental "faith in man's freedom"[229] was starting to collapse. Through the physicalist naturalism the whole idea of humanity was projected "in the manner of plants or stones"[230] – or to use the more popular metaphor of Leibniz and Julien Onfray de La Mettrie, as a "machine" that functions deterministically with regard to external motives.[231] Naturalism, behaviorism and mechanist materialism claimed that our conscious life is not the true ground of our actions, but a mere causal effect of a force that is external to us. This radical naivety which not only crosses the limits of reason, but *willingly turns against the very idea of rationality*, is what constitutes the *radical crisis* of our times.

> The crisis of sciences and at the same time the whole modern culture based on the autonomy of scientific reason is in its ground alone a crisis of philosophy [...] [it] has its ground in a crisis that concerns the self-understanding of human being. The overcoming of this crisis will be established only through a fundamental transformation in human self-understanding.[232]

[227] Watson 1913: 158.

[228] Perhaps the most straightforward formulation is to be found in B.F. Skinner's *Science and Human Behavior*: "The *hypothesis that man is not free* is essential to the application of scientific method to the study of human behavior. The *free* inner *man who is held responsible for the behaviour of the external biological organism is only a pre-scientific substitute for the kinds of causes which are discovered in the course of a scientific analysis.*"Skinner 1953: 447.

[229] HuaVI: 11.

[230] HuaXXVII: 199.

[231] On the "mechanization" of nature and psyche, see HuaIX: 143; HuaXIII: 377; HuaXXXIX: 293.

[232] "Die Krise der Wissenschaften und damit der ganzen, auf der Autonomie der wissenschaftlichen Vernunft basierenden modernen Kultur ist im Grunde allein eine Krise der Philosophie. [...] Die Krise der Wissenschaften hat ihren Grund in einer Krise des Selbstbegreifens des Menschen. Die Überwindung dieser Krise wird einzig und allein durch eine Tieferlegung des menschlichen Selbstverständnisses gelingen konnen." HuaXXIX: 137–138.

Judging by these passages, it seems that instead of cultural, political or societal transformations, Husserl's idea of resolving the crisis of reason relied on the transformation of the individual. We discover this idea in many of the ethical thinkers appreciated by Husserl – such as Socrates, Buddha, Jesus, or even George Bernhard Shaw – who all emphasized the crucial significance of a personal "change of attitude" as the ultimate presupposition of a genuine ethical stance. This insight, however, is only a part of the truth. As I would like to argue, Husserl's idea of a "fundamental transformation in human self-understanding" did not entail a return to the idea of rationality as a mere subjective faculty. Instead, reason was to be discovered anew in its *communal* and *practical* relevance, i.e. as an essentially intersubjective notion that reaches its genuine sense only through the critique of those structures that separate human individuals from each other.

As Husserl was willing to admit, reason was a "broad topic", and the popular critique against the "naïve" rationalism of the Enlightenment, for instance, was in many respects justified.[233] Within the Western forms of rationality there was indeed a certain tendency towards control and domination – what Max Horkheimer later defined as "instrumental rationality" – which had undermined the axiological and practical aspects of human rationality. By emphasizing the essentially theoretical underpinnings of the idea of reason, the modern concept of rationality had avoided the questions of value, purpose, sense and meaning. Reason, in this post-Galilean sense, had become a technique that knows only means without ends. Classical liberalist economic theory, for instance, considered the selfish and calculative utilitarian as the prime example of a "reasonable person", and even in the contemporary political discourse, "rational decision-making" is often contrasted with idealism and utopianism.

However, Husserl remained a fierce defender of rationality throughout his career. Recall that already in *Ideas* I, he defined his project simply as "phenomenology of reason"[234], and this for very simple motives. For Husserl, reason was not primarily a separate faculty (*Fähigkeit*, *Tätigkeit*)

[233] HuaVI: 337. See also HuaXXVII, Beilage XIX: "Der neuzeitliche Rationalismus erfüllt nicht den Ursprungssinn der Rationalität".

[234] HuaIII: 333ff. Cf. HuaI: 22: "Vernunft und Unvernunft, im weitesten Sinn verstanden, bezeichnen keine zufällig-faktischen Vermögen und Tatsachen, sondern gehören zur allgemeinsten Strukturform der transzendentalen Subjektivität überhaupt."

of the mind but the guiding structural principle of our conscious life in general. Reason basically encompassed all different forms of intentionality and their respective forms of sense-bestowing (*Sinngebung*). Besides the objectifying acts characteristic of perceptual experience (i.e. the doxic modes of intentionality), Husserl accounted also for a wide variety of non-objectifying acts such as feeling-sensations (*Gefühlsempfindungen*) that are likewise characterized as forms of givenness with their degrees of intuitive fulfillment. Instead of a modern division between reason and sensibility, Husserl's domain of rationality encompassed both the theoretical as well as practical manners of "positing" (*Setzung*) on the basis of which we take something as valid or untrue, valuable or non-valuable, desirable or non-desirable. In this regard, the problematic of reason was intimidately tied to the question of evidence and motivation, that is, to the question on what grounds do we justify our beliefs, values, and actions.

Thus, instead of characterizing human life primarily in terms of biological attributes or the inextricable singularity of the worldly ego, Husserl defined the idea of rationality primarily in terms of a unique *reflexive capability* extending to the totality of one's acquired habitualities.[235] Human life in rationality, Husserl maintained, denotes the general possibility of regarding one's personal life as a totality, which does not mean the complete transparency of one's personal history or latent drives. Instead, it means the possibility of self-reflection that focuses upon the total horizon of one's own life. In other words, human life is distinguished from all other forms of life by its capability to understand itself as *personal*, as embodying a unified subjective history. This does not mean, however, that we should identify this reflexivity with the *concrete human being* – what is at stake here, argues Husserl, are the *a priori* capabilities and forms of activity that characterize the animal and human life in general.[236] Thus human life is a possibility that can realize itself within the life of an individual, but it can also reach beyond this life by executing itself in interpersonal co-operation.

[235] HuaXXVII: 23–26.

[236] „Selbstverständlich ist hier nicht von empirischen Eigenheiten von Menschen und Tieren die Rede, sondern von Wesensscheidungen, von Unterschieden a priori möglicher Aktformen und Fähigkeiten, a priori möglicher „Menschen" und „Tiere"." HuaXXVII: 25.

It is crucial to pay attention to the central role of the idea of responsibility (*Verantwortlichkeit*) in Husserl's definition of rationality.[237] Husserl used this term primarily in an epistemological sense, to denote the peculiar accountability we have for our beliefs and conceptions. All knowledge must derive its legitimacy straight from the experience in which things are given, and we should avoid all empty presuppositions and preconceptions that characterize our basic existence, the "natural attitude". In the context of first volume of *Ideas*, this insight was formulated under the title of "principle of principles" claiming that "every originary presentive intuition (*originäre gebende Anschauung*) is a legitimizing source of cognition (*Erkenntnis*), that everything originarily [...] offered to us in "intuition" is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, but also only within the limits in which it is presented there."[238] Responsibility, as it defined the structure of theoretical reason, was thus essentially tied to the idea of intuitive evidence. In a certain sense, Husserl saw this idea of "theoretical responsibility" as the defining feature of all genuine philosophy since Plato – a feature that was rendered into a rigorous methodological form especially through Descartes, who defined philosophy as a quest for "knowledge for which he can answer from the beginning, and at each step, by virtue of his own absolute insights".[239]

However, Husserl also employed the term responsibility in a more general sense, that is, in the sense of *ethical* responsibility. Especially in his early Göttingen lectures on ethics, Husserl approached the question of value-statements in terms of intuitive givenness. Just as the cognitive (or doxic) acts have their own mode of fulfillment, so do the axiological: for instance, the value of another person is not postulated through rational deliberation, but it is immediately lived through as evident. In addition to typical modes of perception (*Wahrnehmung*) – for instance, seeing and hearing – our intentional lives are also defined by what Husserl calls value-perceptions (*Wertnehmungen*), which have their own modes of intuitive fulfillment.[240] These perceptions, argued Husserl, have their origin

[237] On the idea of responsibility, see HuaVIII: 198ff.; HuaI: 47. This concept is thoroughly analyzed by Buckley 1992. Cf. Zahavi 2001: 2–3.

[238] "Am Prinzip aller Prinzipen: *daß jede originär gebende Anschauung eine Rechtsquelle der Erkenntnis sei, daß alles, was sich uns in der „Intuition" originär,* [...] *darbietet, einfach hinzunehmen sei, als was es sich gibt, aber auch nur in den Schranken, in denen es sich da gibt* [...]" HuaIII: 52.

[239] HuaI: 44. Cf. HuaVI: 426

[240] HuaXXVIII: 340ff. Cf. HuaIV: 186.

in the feelings of pleasure (*Gefallen*) and displeasure (*Misfallen*). They are also able to create lasting value-objects (*Wertobjekt*) – what Husserl also calls "objectivities of a higher level"[241] – which then become a part of our habitual directedness to the world. Together with cognitive acts, the axiological acts serve as the foundation for a third class of acts, the practical. These acts have their foundation in the domain of drives and instincts, and as such, they are also characterized by intuitive fulfillment.

Actually, the division between the three domains of reason appears itself as a somewhat crude abstraction. As Husserl puts it, in our concrete experience, the cognitive, valuative and practical acts are "intervowen everywhere with one another"[242]. When seeing a person in trouble, this perception involves immediately all of the aforementioned elements: it appears as "true", as "harmful", and, at least in a normal situation, it motivates the will to help the other in despair. However, our experience bears within itself a certain motivational hierarchy, whereby certain intentional acts logically presuppose the existence of others. I cannot interpret the situation as harmful without seeing or hearing about it; likewise, my will is essentially tied to the experience of pleasure of displeasure. Thus in Husserl's motivational hierarchy, the cognitive or doxic modes of perception have a peculiar "privilege" (*Bevorzugung*) in regard to the axiological and practical acts – the latter have their foundation (*Fundierung*) on the doxic.[243]

The relation between theoretical and practical reason, however, is not as straightforward as it seems. Although Husserl privileged the cognitive acts of theoretical reason in his constitutive analyses, in his later works he also emphasized the essentially practical character of all theoretical undertaking. The theoretical attitude, as Husserl understood it, could only be attained by abstaining from all practical interests towards the given environment – although, as Husserl emphasized, this should not entail the complete separation of theory from praxis. It was exactly this occasional conflation of "theoretical reason" with the "theoretical attitude" that led Heidegger to criticize Husserl for privileging the theoretical modes of intentionality in regard to the dynamic and practical modes of intentional-

[241] HuaIV: 9.
[242] HuaXXVIII: 72.
[243] On the primacy (*Vorzug*) of the doxic, see e.g. HuaIII: 289.

ity. "This privilege of the theoretical must be broken," as Heidegger put it already in his early lecture courses of 1919/20, "not by proclaiming the primacy of the practical [...] but because the theoretical itself and as such refers back to the pre-theoretical."[244] Here, Husserl would have obviously *agreed* with Heidegger that theory – as it is understood as an interest-free spectatorship, which focuses on the present givenness of things – has its foundation in the sphere of praxis, of interested action, willing and doing. It is exactly the difficulty of philosophical thinking to not completely alienate the theoretical attitude from the domain of human action – an alienation that was exactly characteristic of the philosophical crisis of modernity.

It is exactly here that we arrive at Husserl's most general definition of crisis. As a general category of our intentional life, the crisis signifies a situation defined by "lack of intuition" (*Anschauungslosigkeit*) – a situation in which our objectivities and validities have lost their evidential foundation. "A crisis of religion takes place", writes Husserl, "as the intuitive value-insights are singled out in lively intuition, as the religiously motivated individual moves lively in his direction from intuition to intuition [...] having forsaken the residual of purely mythical façade from the tradition"[245]. As we discover that we are living according to convictions, principles, or practices that cannot be justified in rational insight, this is the situation of a crisis. To put it in the language of Husserl's earlier works, a crisis is not a total absence of meaning, but rather, an "emptying" of intuition: the inability to find evidence for one's own concepts and ideas.[246]

[244] "Diese Vorherrschaft des Theoretischen muss gebrochen werden, zwar nicht in *der* Weise, dass man einen Primat des Praktischen proklamiert, und nicht deshalb, um nun mal etwas anderes zu bringen, was die Probleme von einer neue Seite zeigt, sondern weil das Theoretische selbst und als solcehs in ein Vortheoretische zurückweist." Heidegger GA 56/57: 59.

[245] "[...] so vollzieht sich eine Krise in der Religion dadurch, daß die intuitiven Wertgehalte in lebendigster Intuition herausgehoben werden, daß das religiös bewegte Individuum in ihrer Richtung von Intuition zu Intuition lebendig fortschreitet [...] und von der Tradition den bloßen mythischen Rahmen als einen Rest irrationaler Faktizität übrigbehält." HuaXXVII: 65.

[246] This was, quite concretely, the spiritual crisis that had affected Husserl's work at the end of 1910s. "Through the [First World War] I lost the continuity of my scientific thread of life", Husserl wrote to his Fritz Kaufmann, "and if I cannot work productively, understand myself, *to read my manuscripts but without bringing them to intuition*, then I am badly off". Husserl's letter to Kaufmann (20.IX.1915) in HuaDokIII: 340.

As Husserl suggests, "crisis" in this general sense is not simply a negative event. Instead, it points towards the structural feature of our conscious striving to fix itself into certain ideas, convictions, and modes of behavior. In its most general sense, this is what Husserl calls the process of *habituation* that constitutes one of the central categories of genetic development of subjectivity (cf. Ch. 2.1) – we grow into certain beliefs, tendencies and practices, which become our "second nature" in the sense that we "grow into them" and do not ask for their justification. In the domain of the development of sense, this process has its counterpart in the process of *sedimentation*, in which novel layers of meaning accumulate upon one another thus making possible the concealment of original intuitions.

The idea of full self-responsibility according to a complete transparency of our beliefs and practices – a full "life in truth" – was of course an unattainable ideal. Husserl was fully aware that in our concrete existence we are constantly gripped by certain hindrances that prevent us from reaching this ideal: we are constantly fixated to unfounded beliefs and conventions, or, we are always burdened by the dead weight of tradition. Instead of defining the absolute *telos* of human life simply in terms of full intuitive givenness – what Aristotle called the "divine" life of theoretical contemplation[247] – Husserl aimed at articulating a more dynamic approach to the idea of rational self-responsibility, which would have acknowledged the inherently "factical" dimension of human existence, that is, our tendency to settle in to certain modes of behavior. This relation is what Husserl delineated with the concept of *renewal* (*Erneuerung*).[248] With this concept Husserl meant simply the possibility to fight against the essential "forgetting" that has its origin in the transcendental structures of subjectivity and meaning-constitution. Through the process of renewal, we have the inherent possibility not to completely protect ourselves against the loss of intuition but to reflect upon our facticity, the beliefs and convictions we have acquired. It is exactly this idea of a loss of meaning that makes possible the development of a greater responsibility. "As inadequacy announces itself through obscurities and contradictions", writes Husserl in the Vienna Lecture, "this motivates the beginning of a universal reflection"[249]. Thus,

[247] Aristotle, *E.N.* X.7 1177b30ff. See also *E.N.* VI.9 1141a33.

[248] On the concept of "renewal" (*Erneuerung*) and "self-renewal" (*Selbstereuerung*), see HuaXXVII: 20ff.; HuaVI: 486; HuaXXIX: 107; HuaXXXVII: 166.

[249] "Meldet sich in Unklarheiten und Widersprüchen die Unzulänglichkeit, so motiviert

renewal is fundamentally an active procedure that contends with the essential *passivity* in us – a movement that Husserl considered indispensable for philosophical reason: "Only through this constant reflexivity is a philosophy universal knowledge"[250].

As I would like to argue, it was exactly this general idea of a loss of meaning that Husserl extended to his analysis on the current state of the European culture. Instead of a mere category of individual life, Husserl reinterpreted the crisis as an essential category of historical development, which necessarily accompanies the generative development of sense and meaning. Culture, as it unfolds in intergenerational transmission of beliefs, values, and practices, is fundamentally defined by inadequately given beliefs and meanings that we acquire by becoming a part of certain generative histories and traditions. I will return to this concept in the last part of the work – now it suffices to conclude that rather than treating the crisis as a contingent event of a particular historical period, the Husserlian phenomenology pointed towards a radical reformulation of this idea that would have ascribed it a *necessary role in the generative and historical development of sense*. This role will help us to acknowledge the cultural aspect of the phenomena of crisis and renewal.

Naturalism and the crisis of culture

Even though Husserl's reflections on ethical life and renewal took their starting-point from the problematic of individual life, they were by no means restricted by this perspective. As Husserl argued in his *Kaizo* essays, the goal of his reflections was nothing less than to establish "a rational reform of community"[251] that would explicate the idea of personal self-responsibility also on a communal level and thus, to make possible the idea of cultural renewal. This task was particularly imminent for the European culture, which had lost the foundation of some of its guiding beliefs. The First World War showed just how easily national solidarity can spark ethnic conflicts, how scientific innovations can be turned into means

dies einen Ansatz für eine universale Besinnung" HuaVI: 339.
[250] "Nur durch diese ständige Reflexivität ist eine Philosophie universale Erkenntnis." Ibid.
[251] HuaXXVII: 5.

of destruction, and how liberal democratic culture can become the playground of short-sighted and egoistic *Realpolitik*. Thus, what the war had revealed was exactly the "loss of meaning" that characterized the most fundamental practices and institutions of the European culture, what Husserl called its "inner untruth" (*innere Unwahrheit*) and "meaninglessness" (*Sinnlosigkeit*).[252]

Furthermore, as Husserl maintained, the completely self-responsible *Vernunftmenschheit* appeared as a distant ideal that was hindered by the skeptical pessimism and political sophistry of his time.[253] However, the root of the problem was not in the loss of individual ideals of culture but in the fundamental crisis of rational development as a whole. The First World War had revealed not only the inner inconsistencies of democracy and nationalism – of modernization and technological development – but a more devastating collapse of philosophical reason as the driving force of cultural progress. Philosophy, which had given up the promise of the historical progress through reason – the secret providence (Kant) or emancipation (Hegel) supporting the European tradition – seemed to had lost its creative strength as a critical force of cultural development. Unable to nurture the motive of rational renewal, it merely descended into a position of disinterested spectator divested of its critical potentiality.

It is exactly here that we discover the primal reason for Husserl's reserved and critical relation towards the discourse on *crisis*. Whereas for the historical consciousness of the 18th and 19th centuries, the idea of crisis was still related to the idea of regeneration and cultural renewal, for the discourse of the early twentieth century, these ideas seemed to lose their ground. Instead, the concept of crisis – as it was employed to denote the idea of cultural sickness by Spengler and others – served as the key factor for the infiltration of *organic-naturalist* as well as *historicist* metaphors into the basic logic of cultural development. As Husserl himself put it in the Vienna Lecture:

> Now clearly there exists the distinction between energetic thriving and atrophy, that is, one can also say, between *health and sickness*, even in communities, peoples, states. Accordingly the question is not far removed: How does it happen that no scientific medicine has ever developed in this sphere, a medicine for nations and su-

[252] HuaXXVII: 3.
[253] HuaXXVII: 5

> pranational communities? The European nations are sick; Europe itself, it is said, is in crisis. We are by no means lacking something like doctors of nature.[254]

These lines should be interpreted cautiously. Husserl was by no means simply ascribing to this lamentation on the absence of scientific medicine for nations and supranational communities. He was clearly speaking from an ironic distance: the reference to the "doctors of nature" (*Naturheilkundigen*) was an allusion to the different forms of naturopathy whose indoctrination was an inseparable part of the early twentieth-century *Lebensphilosophie* movements. This branch – nowadays referred to as "alternative medicine" – included such treatments as homeopathy, herbalism and other forms of folk medicine whose efficiency, at least from the perspective of scientific medicine, was highly questionable. What was clear, however, was that the discourse of crisis strengthened the logic of a cultural disease, which portrayed the whole development of culture as an essentially passive occurrence. As he continues:

> But what if the whole way of thinking that manifests itself in the foregoing presentation rested on portentous prejudices and, in its effects, *itself shared in the responsibility for the European sickness*?[255]

Thus the discourse on crisis, with its medicalist and naturalist implications, was itself contributing to the loss of an ideal – the ideal of an active, self-responsible culture. In the similar manner as the naturalist and behaviorist psychology had attacked the idea of self-responsible and voluntaristic individual, the naturalist-organic categories of Spengler and others had been explicit attacks on the idea of rational culture. In Husserl's view, the human sciences had become "blinded by naturalism"[256] insofar as that even the notion of culture itself was considered a natural phenomenon. Whereas for Plato and Rousseau, the metaphor of body politic had

[254] "Offenbar besteht nun der Unterschied zwischen kraftvoliem Gedeihen und Verkümmern, also, wie man auch sagen kann, von Gesundheit und Krankheit, auch für Gemeinschaften, für Völker, für Staaten. Demnach liegt die Frage nicht so fern: Wie kommt es, daß es in dieser Hinsicht nie zu einer wissenschaftlichen Medizin, einer Medizin der Nationen und übernationalen Gemeinschaften gekommen ist? Die europäischen Nationen sind krank, Europa selbst ist, sagt man, in einer Krisis. An so etwas wie Naturheilkundigen fehlt es hier durchaus nicht." HuaVI: 315. Cf. HuaVI: 550.

[255] "Aber wie, wenn die ganze in dieser Darstellung sich bekundende Denkweise auf verhängnisvollen Vorurteilen beruhte und in ihren Auswirkungen selbst mitschuldig wäre an der europäischen Erkrankung?" HuaVI: 317. My italics.

[256] HuaVI: 318.

still pointed towards the possibility of active-practical renewal – either through the co-operation of philosophers or the underlying general will – the early 20th century had turned this "living body" into a mere object that allows manipulations or interventions to take place. As Spengler himself put it, the development of humanity did not contain within itself any "aim, idea, or plan, any more than the family of butterflies or orchids", but instead, humanity was nothing else than "a zoological expression or an empty word."[257] Thus, against the organic and non-teleological view of Spengler's, Husserl maintained that in order for a cultural renewal to come about, we need to radically rethink our fundamental concepts of cultural development:

> [In the development of the European culture] it is not a case of one of those purposeful strivings which give the organic beings their character in the physical realm; thus it is not something like a biological development from a seminal form through stages to maturity with succeeding ages and dying-out. There is essentially no *zoology of peoples*. Nations are spiritual unities and they do not have, and in particular the supranational Europe does not have, a mature shape that has ever reached or could be reached as a shape that is regularly repeated.[258]

Thus what Husserl was insisting on was a new understanding of cultural development that would have allowed the possibility of a rational renewal – a renewal that was still on the horizon of the philosophers of modernity. In order to arrive at such an understanding, Husserl needed to rediscover the philosophical sense of the idea of spiritual *teleology*; however, this idea was to be divested of its unfounded theological and metaphysical connotations. As I will argue in part 4, it was exactly this insight that constituted the basic point of departure for Husserl's renewed understanding of the historical consciousness of modernity. At this stage, it suffices to point out that the problematic of Europe was indeed tangled *with the very concept of crisis*, above all, with its *organic-naturalist implications* that had also infiltrated our understanding of culture.

[257] Spengler 1991: 17.

[258] "Nicht als ob es sich hier um eine der bekannten Zielstrebigkeiten handelte, die dem physischen Reich der organischen Wesen ihren Charakter geben; also um so etwas wie biologische Entwicklung von einer Keimgestalt in Stufenbis zur Reife mit nachfolgendem Altern und Absterben. Es gibt wesensmäßig keine Zoologie der Völker. Sie sind geistige Einheiten, sie haben, und insbesondere die Übernationalität Europa hat keine je erreichte und erreichbare reife Gestalt als Gestalt einer geregelten Wiederholung." HuaVI: 320.

Crisis of historicism revisited: cultural relativism

However, naturalism was not the only sickness that had attacked the idea of philosophical rationality, and consequently, the development of culture. As I argued in chapter 1.3, one of the central motives of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century philosophy was the growing division of natural and humanistic sciences that was particularly reflected in the novel debate on *historicism*. This idea, which first originated through the historical-hermeneutical movements of the nineteenth century, was originally employed in a positive sense, denoting something like a *historical sensitivity*: in our attempts to interpret and reconstruct historical events (or texts), we should always be cautious with regard to the temporal distance between the historical evidence and ourselves. However, in the course of the nineteenth century, historicism became gradually synonymous with the idea of *historical relativism* according to which all knowledge is essentially context-dependent, and there is no absolute position through which we could overcome the particularity of different historical world-views.

As I argued at the beginning of this chapter, Husserl's early philosophy was defined by a highly critical attitude with regard to historicism. Usually taking Dilthey as his main adversary, Husserl saw historicism as a false solution to the growing authority of the modern natural sciences. By emphasizing the unique character of historical research, historicism seemed to undermine the need for a radical reflection concerning the ultimate unity of scientific enterprise. The central position that historicism had given to such notions as *Weltanschauung* or *Zeitgeist* had driven the human sciences to consider all cultural accomplishments – including philosophy – as mere phenomena of their own times. Even though Husserl did not oppose the idea of "historical sense" that was inherent to the development of modern historiography, he interpreted its growing popularity as a threat for a unified transcendental philosophy.

However, in Husserl's later works on crisis, the critique of historical relativism took a somewhat different direction. Even though the word historicism had itself gone through a crisis during the first decades of the twentieth-century – it was heavily criticized and lost a lot of its philosophical significance – it had not completely disappeared. Instead, it had taken a different form. The rapid expansion of cultural, anthropological and eth-

nological studies at the beginning of the twentieth century emphasized the relativist tendencies of historicism, however, this time in the guise of *cultural relativism*. Comparative studies such as E.B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871), Andrew Lang's *Custom and Myth* (1884), and J.G. Frazier's classic *The Golden Bough* (1890) brought new attention to the rich and manifold cults and myths of the newly discovered West African cultures.[259] Even though many of the authors found significant analogies between the symbolic structures of Western and other cultures – and nurtured the 18th century idea of the Noble Savage – it was also common to see the "primitive" forms of life as essentially incongruent with those of the Western world. One of the most influential critics of the so-called "unilineal evolution" was Franz Boas, who became known for his insistence on several standards of progress. Civilization, Boas argued, was not to be conceived as something absolute, but as something fundamentally "relative, and that our ideas and conceptions are true only so far as our civilization goes"[260]. Alongside with historical relativism, Husserl came to acknowledge what seemed to have become the imminent corollary of historicism: the *cultural asymmetry* of truth and value.

Actually, when Husserl speaks of historical relativism in his later texts, he often refers to a stance that accentuates the specific relativity of cultural accomplishments. For instance, in a manuscript dated to November 1933 Husserl sets himself to counter the "objection of *historical relativity*: all of our interpretations are European" ("*Einwand der historischen Relativität: Alle unsere Auslegung ist europäisch etc*."[261]). As the title indicates, Husserl was asking whether the popular contrast between European and other worldviews should compel us to think that ultimately, they do not share any common ground, and that we should abandon the whole idea of universal philosophy for the sake of cultural-historical contingencies.

[259] Husserl was also acquainted with at least Tylor's work, for he refers to him in *his Philosophy of Arithmetic*. On Husserl and anthropology see Bernasconi 2005, Moran 2011.
[260] Boas 1988: 142. Emphasis was laid especially on the linguistic structures of different cultures, which were seen to reflect the more fundamental forms of experience and reason. Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, for one, discussed the lack of verb tense in the Hopi Indian language, and interpreted it as reflecting the absence of linear time in this culture. The lack of verb tense was not merely a matter of linguistic peculiarity, but of world-openness: in the framework of the Hopi culture, events are tightly linked to one another. On the different senses of "anthropology" in Husserl, see Orth 1987: 106–107.
[261] HuaXXXIX: 170

In this regard, one particular source that turned out to be crucial for Husserl was Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, a French anthropologist whose works Husserl had studied avidly from 1920s onwards.[262] The two developed a personal relationship and also engaged in scientific correspondence during the 1930s. Husserl credited Lévy-Bruhl not only for providing rich empirical material – Lévy-Bruhl was particularly known for studying the preliterate tribes, although his work relied heavily on secondary sources – but also for his striving for a "rigorous scientific ethnology"[263], that is, for his attempts to lay foundations for a systematic science of cultural development. According to Husserl, it was particularly Lévy-Bruhl whose work had pointed out the necessity to establish a "pure human-scientific anthropology"[264] – an autonomous branch of scientific research with its unique methodology and concepts. As Husserl emphasized in his letter to Lévy-Bruhl, the anthropological studies had "set out the problem of correlation between 'We' and 'environment' (*Umwelt*) as "transcendental-phenomenological" [...] finally referring back to the problem of the absolute ego."[265] As analogical to the domain of "pure psychology", pure anthropology would have delineated the general forms of social co-operation, which serve as the foundation for the constitution of cultural objectivities (such as language, religion, the economy).

However, Lévy-Bruhl's analyses seemed to be accompanied by some controversial presuppositions. Already in his early study *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (1910), Lévy-Bruhl had put forward a controversial thesis concerning the essentially unique character of rationality among the preliterate tribes. This character, argued Lévy-Bruhl, differed significantly from the Western idea of rationality due to its different logical structure. Since the publication of *La mentalité primitive* (1922), Lévy-Bruhl articulated this difference in terms of a "primitive mentality" and (Western) "civilized thought", out of which only the latter deserved to be called logical in a pregnant sense. Even though the primitive mind was not completely illogical, it lacked some of the central elements of abstract

[262] The Husserl Library in Leuven contains a series of Lévy-Bruhl's works, including two editions of *La mentalite primitive* (1922 and 1931) and *La mythologie primitive* (1935). See Moran 2011.
[263] HuaDokVII: 161.
[264] HuaDokVII: 162.
[265] HuaDokVII: 163.

reasoning, for instance, the idea of causality or the law of the excluded middle. According to Lévy-Bruhl, the pre-logical character of the primitive mind was evident in the fact that allowed contradictions to appear – for instance, the same object could appear in two different places at the same time – and it was in some cases unable to distinguish between subjective and objective reality (e.g., it did not strictly separate between dream and reality).[266] These insights were further advanced by Wilhelm Nestle's influential study of Greeks, *Vom Mythos zum Logos* (1940). Moreover, leaning to the Durkheimian notion of "collective representations", Lévy-Bruhl accentuated the radically divergent way of positing the relation between individual and community among the primitive tribes. According to Lévy-Bruhl, although the primitive tribes did not completely lack the idea of individual person, it treated this as a kind of extrapolation of the collective representations. Thus, what they lacked was a concept of human subjectivity as the zero-point of experience, which would constitute the ultimate point of departure for the idea of "objective world".

From Husserl's perspective, Lévy-Bruhl's discoveries appeared as significant challenges for phenomenological theory of subjectivity. First, by arguing for the radically non-subjectivist worldview of the primitive tribes, Lévy-Bruhl came to contest the possibility of such "pure psychology" that could be constructed apart from anthropological and ethnological insights. Individual psychology, as Lévy-Bruhl interpreted it, made sense insofar as it is situated in the context of a cultural, societal and religious framework of sense. The subjectivist, self-centered approach of Western psychology was not simply false; however, from the perspective of the primitive mind it was clearly inadequate. Thus the somewhat unforeseeable remark in Husserl's Vienna Lecture – "Even the Papuan is a man and not a beast"[267] – becomes understandable in contrast to Lévy-Bruhl's *La mythologie primitive* (1935), which had related the theoretical framework to the empirical material of Australian and Papuan tribes.[268] Secondly, Lévy-Bruhl's findings seemed to question the possibility of a universal moral

[266] Lévy-Bruhl 1923: 101–107.

[267] "Nach der guten alten Definition ist der Mensch das vernünftige Lebewesen, und in diesem weiten Sinne ist auch der Papua Mensch und nicht Tier." HuaVI: 337. The figure of the Papuan was central for German philosophers also because New Guinea was a German colony from 1884 to 1914.

[268] The subtitle of the work was *Le monde mythique des Autraliens et des Papous*.

philosophy that would overcome the inherent discrepancies between individual societies. Morality, as he saw it, could only arise from the conditions of a particular cultural environment, which meant that Western standards should not be applied to the non-Western societies. Thus the only reasonable position that moral philosophy could take after the introduction of preliterate tribes was that of cultural and historical relativism.[269]

In his letter to Lévy-Bruhl from 1935, Husserl went as far as to claim that "historical relativism does have an undisputed justification", however, it does so only as "an anthropological fact".[270] But this fact – announing itself in the incongruence of cultural accomplishments – merely corroborated the need to articulate phenomenology in a way that could have described the process of normative specification that takes place in the generative development of individual cultures. Moreover, what the anthropological studies had also revealed was the novel requirement to investigate the "theoretical attitude", not merely in regard to other personal attitudes (e.g. the natural, the personalistic), but as a temporally evolving form that has its foundation in the pre-theoretical (i.e. mythical) attitude. Following the ideas of Émile Durkheim, Edward B. Tylor and Andrew Lang, Husserl accentuated the need for a *teleological description* that would have explained, first of all, the transition from the spiritual-animistic religions to monotheism, which – according to the narrative provided by Husserl – executed itself through a peculiar "logicisation" of the primitive myths.[271] Thus theory, which constituted one of the central perquisites for the idea of Europe, was to be conceived not as a simple origin, but as a peculiar "transformation" (*Umstellung*) from the pre-theoretical.[272] I will return to this idea in the third part of the work.

[269] See Stoller 1998: 242.
[270] HuaDokVII: 163.
[271] HuaVI: 335. On the "lifeworld of the primitive" as the point of departure, see HuaXXVII: 225.
[272] HuaVI: 326. Cf. HuaVI: 329–330: "For a deeper understanding of the Greek-European science (universally speaking, philosophy) in its fundamental difference from the Oriental philosophies judged equal to it, it is now necessary to consider more closely the practical-universal attitude which created these philosophies prior to European science and to clarify it as the religious-mythical attitude." ("Für das tiefere Verständnis der griechisch-europäischen Wissenschaft (universal gesprochen: der Philosophie) in ihrem prinzipiellen Unterschied von den gleichbewerteten orientalischen „Philosophien" ist es nun notwendig, die praktisch-universale Einstellung, wie sie vor der europäischen Wissenschaft sich jene Philosophien schuf, näher zu betrachten und sie als religiös-mythische aufzuklären.")

It was perhaps Merleau-Ponty who was the first to emphasize the significance of anthropological considerations with regard to Husserl's late phenomenology of generativity. As Merleau-Ponty points out, the anthropological considerations had provided Husserl with a new and a valuable motive, that is, the need to engage in a rational dialogue with the prescientific idea of culture. But this also meant that phenomenology – contrary to what Husserl had insisted in his earlier works – could not execute its task merely by abstaining from the results of individual sciences. As Merleau-Ponty put it: "Judging by Husserl's later views, philosophy would gain autonomy after, and not before the positive sciences."[273] This shift of position, he continues,

> [...] no longer makes philosophy the rival of scientific knowledge, now that we have recognized that the "interior" it brings us back to is not a private life but an intersubjectivity that gradually connects us ever closer to the whole of history. When I discover that the social is not simply an object but to begin with my situation, and when I awaken within myself the consciousness of this social-which-is-mine, then my whole synchrony becomes present to me, through that synchrony I become capable of really thinking about the whole past as the synchrony it has been in its time, and all the convergent and discordant action of the historical community is effectively given to me in my living present. Giving up systematic philosophy as an explanatory device does not reduce philosophy to the rank of an auxiliary or a propagandist in the service of objective knowledge; for philosophy has a dimension of its own, the dimension of coexistence – not as a *fait accompli* and an object of contemplation, but as the milieu and perpetual event of the universal praxis.[274]

As I will elaborate in more detail later, Husserl's preoccupation with the social and intergenerational dimension of phenomenology – the *generative phenomenology* – did also signify a growing interest towards the idea of coexistence at the heart of human subjectivity. By emphasizing the need for a renewed stance towards the "presuppositions" of phenomenological research, Husserl was able to point towards an understanding of philosophy not merely as an individualistic endeavor but as an essentially intergenerational process, which realizes itself only through a critical relation towards

[273] Merleau-Ponty 1968: 108.
[274] Merleau-Ponty 1968: 112–113.

one's cultural and historical situation. This process, as we shall observe later, involved also an essential relation to the other not merely as an object of conversion but as the fundamental perquisite of a critical stance.

These reflections provide us with the possibility of providing a preliminary delineation of the idea of crisis as a category of cultural development (discussed in part 4). Instead of the passive and medical connotations that had become dominant for this notion, Husserl still aimed at rediscovering this notion according to the underlying sense of *active resolution* that had been concealed by the naturalist paradigm. Against the idea of crisis as an overarching demise of culture – an irrevocable "loss of meaning" – Husserl insisted on rearticulating the idea of crisis according to the idea of historical decision, which, by realistically assessing the present moment according to its guiding beliefs, could have still nurtured the idea of cultural renewal. Instead of a mere collection of acquired validities, tradition is also something that we ought to bring into a crisis, something to which we have to *make a difference* (Gr. *krinein*). This, I believe, is the ultimate lesson of the European crisis:

> The "crisis of European existence", which manifests itself in countless symptoms of a corrupted life, is not an obscure fate nor an impenetrable destiny. Instead, it becomes manifestly understandable against the background of the philosophically discoverable *teleology of European history*. [...] The crisis of European existence has only two possible outcomes: either the ruin of a Europe alienated from its rational sense of life, fallen into barbarian hatred of spirit; or in the rebirth of Europe from the spirit of philosophy, through the heroism of reason that will definitively overcome naturalism.[275]

[275] "Die heute so viel beredete, sich in unzähligen Symptomen des Lebenszerfalls dokumentierende "Krise des europäischen Daseins" ist kein dunkles Schicksal, kein undurchdringliches Verhängnis, sondern wird verständlich und durchschaubar auf dem Hintergrund der philosophisch aufdeckbaren Teleologie der europäischen Geschichte. [...] Die Krise des europäischen Daseins hat nur zwei Auswege: Den Untergang Europas in der Entfremdung gegen seinen eigenen rationalen Lebenssinn, den Verfall in Geistfeindschaft und Barbarei, oder die Wiedergeburt Europas aus dem Geiste der Philosophie durch einen den Naturalismus endgültig überwindenden Heroismus der Vernunft." HuaVI: 348. Translation modified. We find this idea of a clear-cut historical decision also in Heidegger's so-called Rome lecture of 1936 *Europa und die deutsche Philosophie*: "Our historical existence (*Dasein*) is experiencing with growing anxiety and clarity that its future will amount to an 'either–or' that leads either to Europe's salvation or to its destruction." Heidegger 1993: 31. On Husserl's and Heidegger's notions of crisis, see Buckley 1992; Miettinen 2009.

Thus phenomenology, instead of being mere description of the existing state of affairs, was to be conceived as an essentially normative praxis, which, instead of abstaining from the concrete reality of societal and political affairs, finds its genuine essence through the recognition of cultural crises of meaning. Through the growing sensitivity towards the essentially practical and normative underpinnings of phenomenology, Husserl became a philosophical decisionist – someone who necessarily formulates his stance in relation to the social, historical and cultural presuppositions of the present moment. As Husserl himself confirmed in a letter in 1934, this shift of position, besides being motivated by the inner development of his own phenomenological method, had been imposed upon him by the present state of affairs: "The role of a completely disinterested spectator is for us, in this moment, all too difficult to maintain."[276]

* * *

I began this chapter by considering Foucault's characterization of the modern age in terms of a specific attitude towards the present moment. As I pointed out, Foucault insisted on reading the modern fascination towards the notion of crisis in terms of a heroization of the present moment, as the condensation of historical time into the form of a singular 'now'. We, the philosophers of the twenty-first century, are of course familiar with this tendency, though not primarily in the sense of philosophical heroism. Through the repeating economic, political, and social crises of our time, our situation resembles a bit of the post-war Europe in the sense that we have gradually descended into a permanent "state of exception", which focuses all of its attention to the demands of the present moment. We no longer think we can escape this yoke of this exception; instead, our political action is more and more targeted towards the management of different crises: political, economic, social and cultural. Whereas the modern age began with the essential interdependence of crisis and political idealism – as for Rousseau, the crisis had revealed the transitory character of sover-

[276] "Die Rolle des völlig "unbetheiligten Zuschauers" ist – für unsereins, zur Zeit – allzu schwer innezuhalten" HuaDokVII, 13–14.

eign power – for our own time the situation seems the opposite. We have lost this connection between crisis and utopia; our politics of the crisis present us with mere imperatives to react.

In his *History of the Idea of Progress*, Robert Nisbet writes: "The idea of progress holds that mankind has advanced in the past – from some aboriginal condition of primitiveness, barbarism, or even nullity – is now advancing, and will continue to advance through the foreseeable future."[277] According to his detailed account, losing sight of this belief would entail also the loss of other central ideas of our own tradition, most importantly, the sound belief in the self-governing and self-responsible humankind. Keeping with this (Hegelian) definition, however, it is perhaps easy to take sides with the cultural pessimists such as Burckhardt and Nietzsche, and claim that the barbarism of culture has not vanished altogether but it surfaces in different forms. In the contemporary threat of ecocatastrophes, global warfare, and growing social disintegration, perhaps the very idea of *self-responsibility* entails a *more critical relation* towards the idea of progress.

We arrive at the following questions: Is it possible, following Husserl, to rediscover this connection between crisis and political idealism? Is it possible to promote the idea of a *critique of the present moment* withdrawn from the false preconceptions concerning its status in the grand narratives of world history? Can the notion of crisis become, as Husserl insisted, not only the problem but also the solution – something that opens up a creative horizon of action? These questions will be answered in the following parts of this work.

[277] Nisbet 1980: 4–5.

—II—

Generativity and Transcendental Phenomenology

It is a rather evident feature of human existence that we find ourselves to be in contact with other people. In our everyday lives, our dealings and projects are intertwined with those of other people – our daily praxis relies not only on the existence of the outer world but also on our fellow dwellers. We expect others not only to be there but also to "do their part", to fulfill whatever roles or duties they carry as being a part of different social bodies. This trust is, however, something that has to develop in the course of our lives: it may be shaken, distorted, or even exhausted. Following Aristotle, it is perhaps justified to call human sociality *natural* (*fysei*)[1] in the sense that one needs to grow (*fyō*) into it. What makes human beings "the most social animal" (*mallōn zōon politikon*) is not that we would need (or enjoy) each other's company more than other species, but rather, because of the complexity of our social relations: our mutual trust can be built and broken in endlessly many ways. We may choose to withdraw from the life of the community into a momentary solitude – where, as Cicero once put it, one might feel the least lonely[2] – but we can never really leave behind the facticity of communal life. The others are embedded in our experience through various cognitive and practical relations: beliefs, desires, and volitions.

Nevertheless, in the contemporary debate it is one of the most persistent claims against phenomenology that it has neglected the social dimension of human existence, or, that it has failed to develop a sufficient conceptual framework for it. This idea is quite often linked to the apparent "individualism" of phenomenology: from Husserl to Heidegger, from Merleau-Ponty to Sartre, phenomenology has concentrated on the

[1] On the "naturalness" of *polis* and human sociality, see Aristotle, *Pol.* I.1.1253a2–3.
[2] "*numquam minus solum esse quam cum solus esset*", Cicero, *De re pub.* I.17.

existence of the individual human being both methodologically as well as ontologically. Taking its point of departure from the experience of the first person singular, phenomenology has directed its attention to the different modes of individual experience, whether these modes have been framed in regard to the idea of transcendental *subjectivity* as the ground of all being (Husserl), or its explicitly anti-subjectivist variations such as Heidegger's early ontology of *Dasein*. Despite the immense variation of approaches within the post-Husserlian tradition, the limits of phenomenology have been conceived according to the lines of modern transcendental philosophy: phenomenology investigates the different modes of personal world-disclosure whose general structures are to be located within the experiencing individual.

There is something in Husserl's phenomenology that, perhaps even more than in the case of other philosophies, predisposes it to this type of critique. Husserl was a philosopher of subjectivity whose conceptual framework was significantly influenced by modern transcendental philosophy. Especially after the publication of the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl's philosophical terminology became more and more invested with Cartesian-Kantian notions, and, as we may learn from his *Briefwechsel*, during the early 1910s he had envisioned a "critique of reason" upon a "Kantian foundation"[3]. This project, as it was realized through the transcendental nomenclature of *Ideas* (ego, subject, *cogito* and self-consciousness), was to be conceived a form of *transcendental idealism*, which posited the "transcendental ego" as the uncontested foundation of all meaning and sense. Moreover, in the later period of his thinking, Husserl invoked the Leibnizian idea of "windowless" *monad* in order to describe the temporal becoming of the subject. Thus, it is perhaps understandable that for philosophers interested in questions of the social sphere, Husserl's phenomenology has not appeared the most fertile or relevant starting point. It seems inward-looking and individualistic, perhaps even negligent towards the socio-political sphere.

This argument on the dismissal of the social phenomena in Husserl's reflections has been articulated at least in three different preconceptions. First of all, there is a long tradition of critique proposing that Husserl's phenomenology promotes an idea of an abstract, solitary subject, and

[3] HuaDokV: 14. See Mohanty 1996.

thus, it falls into the trap of *solipsism* or *subjective idealism*.[4] From early on, this critique was based on an interpretation of Husserl's notion of constitution as a subjectivist construction, according to which the ego was said to "edify" the world and other subjects from the particular contents of consciousness. This idea was coined with the Kantian notion of *atemporal* transcendental subjectivity. Although Husserl worked sedulously on the problematic of temporality from 1904 onwards, the first volume of *Ideas* devoted only a single paragraph to the problem of time-consciousness.[5] Thus it is not surprising to find that Adorno, one of the first critics of phenomenology-as-idealism, considered Husserl the "the most static thinker of his period"[6]. Secondly, a more refined line of critique – formulated also within the phenomenological tradition – acknowledged Husserl's interest in intersubjectivity, but saw it as conceptually and methodologically insufficient with regard to the concrete phenomena of the social sphere. Alfred Schütz, for one, emphasized the significance of Husserl's constitutional analyses for his reinterpretation of the Weberian interpretive sociology, but argued that Husserl's own philosophy was not "conversant with the concrete problems of the social sciences"[7]. Behind Schütz's position was his conviction that one could not advance very far with the transcendental analyses of Husserl, and that one needed to accompany these analyses with a "constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude"[8], an investigation of social relations as they appear within concrete experience. During the past decades, the development of sociology and cultural studies has benefitted perhaps more from the non-Husserlian currents of phenomenology such as structuralism and (Heideggerian) hermeneutics. Thirdly, because of the specific importance that Husserl bestowed upon the *descriptive* element of phenomenology, many critics have been discontent with the apparent lack of a normative dimension in his philosophy. Habermas, for one, has put forward the notion of Husserlian "scientism" that focuses on "pure theory", and has contrasted this with the "emancipatory sciences" of the Marxist tradition as well as the Frankfurt School.[9] It is often stated

[4] On the early critiques of Husserl's idealism, see esp. Adorno 1940; Hook 1930.
[5] This was the paragraph §81 ("Die phänomenologische Zeit und das Zeitbewußtsein") of *Ideas* I, see HuaI: 196ff.
[6] Adorno 1940: 7.
[7] Schütz 1959: 88.
[8] Schütz 1967: 44.
[9] Habermas 1971: 316ff.

that phenomenology has nothing to say to the concrete problems of social existence, that it withdraws from the sphere of politics, or, that it is negligent with regard to the ideological constellations of, for instance, today's capitalist market economy. In this vein, phenomenology may help us to see, but not to act – it may provide us with an analysis of truth and falsity, but not of right or wrong.

These critiques should not be bypassed as mere historical curiosities. The development of later Continental philosophy (or post-phenomenology) has been significantly directed by the dissatisfaction to the alleged subjectivism of the father of phenomenology – or, to put it in Lacanian terms, from the disavowal of not the actual father but the symbolic one, that is, from the disavowal of the complete set of beliefs and practices that interdict the Husserlian praxis of philosophy. As Michel Foucault once put it in an interview, "everything that took place in the sixties arose from a dissatisfaction with the phenomenological theory of the subject", motivating the well-known "escapades, subterfuges, breakthroughs [...] in the direction of linguistics, psychoanalysis, or Nietzsche"[10]. As Foucault corroborated elsewhere, the main source of dissatisfaction was the seeming non-historicity of the Husserlian theory of subject, which made it immune to the critical approach of his own philosophical generation. "One has to dispense with the constituent subject", Foucault argued, "to get rid of the subject itself, that's to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework."[11] For Foucault, this alternate approach was of course what he called the Nietzschean *genealogy*: the investigation of different discourses embodying historically constructed structures of power, which, rather than being at the subject's disposal, constantly *produce* human subjectivity as well as its normative ideals.

As I will argue in this part, these critiques are based on an inadequate understanding of Husserl's phenomenological project. Besides being gross misinterpretations of Husserl's notion of constitution, they also neglect the immense stress that Husserl laid on the problematic of intersubjectivity. Instead of a formal principle of experience, Husserl understood

[10] See Raulet's interview of Foucault (1983: 199).
[11] Foucault 1984c: 59.

transcendental subjectivity as fundamentally singular, personal and temporal – as something which necessarily involves a relation to other experiencing subjects within a particular cultural or historical situation. Moreover, these critiques also ignore the highly refined conceptual framework of Husserl's "social ontology", i.e. the phenomenological analysis of interpersonal communities, their temporal genesis and different modes of meaning-constitution. Despite the inextricably first-person oriented character of the phenomenological method, phenomenology itself was not restricted to the problem of individual consciousness and its characteristics – instead, this domain merely provided the necessary point of departure for the vast variety of problems relating to communal, historical, cultural-linguistic, and even territorial forms of meaning-constitution.

Instead of rushing straight to the problem of intersubjectivity, I will start by focusing on the idea of *genesis* and its respective method of investigation – the *genetic phenomenology* – in Husserl's philosophy (Ch. 2.1). This topic is important for two reasons. First, by opening up the temporal dimension of constitution this analysis enables us to distinguish Husserl's theory of transcendental subjectivity from its Kantian predecessor. Secondly, by accommodating the process of meaning-constitution into the overall communal-traditional horizon – what Husserl calls the structure of *generativity* – the topic of genesis leads us to locate the (Foucauldian) idea motive of subject-constitution within a historical framework. These insights constitute the point of departure for the following chapter, in which I will turn to the basic questions of Husserl's "social ontology" (Ch. 2.2). I will situate Husserl's position against two contemporary variations of social philosophy – the analytical social ontology and the ideology-critical current of contemporary Marxism – and show that Husserl's analyses on intersubjectivity transcended the idea of co-operation as the basic framework of the social sphere. The problem of intersubjectivity should be understood in essential connection to the domain of passivity, which, unlike for the tradition of modern transcendental philosophy, is to be understood as fundamentally temporal and social. As I will show, instead of a domain of self-enclosed domain of subjective receptivity, Husserl understood passivity in close connection to the problem of objective and intersubjective world-constitution. It was exactly this insight into the inextricably social character of constitution – all objectivity is necessarily

grounded in intersubjectivity – that served as the transition to the social, cultural, and historical specification of this process.

This specification, founded on the problem of empathy and social acts, leads us to the problem of lifeworld (Ch. 2.3). Through a genetic analysis of the lifeworld, Husserl was able to endow this notion with two seemingly opposite senses, i.e. that of universal correlate of intersubjective experience and the normatively delineated horizon of experience (e.g. a cultural lifeworld). In order to clarify this process of normative specification and the sense of familiarity implied within it, Husserl introduced a novel conceptual distinction between "homeworld" and "alienworld". This distinction, besides referring to the constitution of cultural identities through the encounter with the alien, pointed towards the essential intertwining of generativity and territoriality: interpersonal associations, besides defining themselves through manifold historical accounts or "narratives", acquire for themselves a sense of collective identity through a necessary relation to lifeworld and its cultural accomplishments. This insight on the essentially reciprocal relation of community and culture will be discussed in the last chapter of this part (Ch. 2.4). This relation is central to Husserl's theory of generativity and historicity because it enables us to locate one of the crucial shortcomings of Hegel's theory of objective spirit: the distinction (or "correlation") between different modes of interpersonal co-operation and its respective accomplishments. As I will show, this distinction between "community" and "culture" serves as the point of departure for Husserl's somewhat controversial analysis on intersubjective associations as "personalities of a higher order", i.e. communities as personal and self-regulating totalities. Although this approach did not entail a complete break with Husserl's commitment to phenomenology and its first-person perspective, it served as the key transition to the broadened idea of renewal as an essentially interpersonal and cultural process.

It is namely this methodological and conceptual background against which we ought to read Husserl's considerations of Europe – not as distinct exercises of contemporary critique but as critical confrontations with the problems of historical teleology and communal co-operation constituting *a normative ideal of rational culture*. Europe, as I will argue in part 3, was to be understood as a specific idea of cultural rationality, which articulated itself through a renewed understanding of home and alien, manifesting

itself in the new forms of cultural objectivity and a personality of a higher order.

2.1. Genesis and the Life of the Subject

In the previous section that dealt with the topic of crisis in Husserl's philosophy, I stressed the importance of the post-WWI discourse for Husserl's philosophical commitment. During these years, what first seemed more like an internal crisis of science turned out to involve a more thoroughgoing concern on the possibility of a rational culture. Husserl was disappointed not only to the development of worldly events but to the inability of philosophy in enforcing its cultural, societal or political potential. Through its adherence to the one-sided naturalistic rationality of the objectivist sciences, philosophy did not seem to contribute to the rearticulation of the normative ideals of humanity, of good and bad, right and wrong. Instead, it seemed to accept Carl Schmitt's thesis on the perennially conflictual nature of the political domain. Military or economic power, not truth or reason, dominated the discourse on the ultimate foundation of community.

This disappointment extended into the very foundations of Husserl philosophy insofar as he felt the need to rework his phenomenological project in order to react to this empirical event and the loss of meaning entailed with it. Alongside with the ego-oriented approach of transcendental phenomenology, Husserl began to emphasize the *communal* and *normative* dimensions of the phenomenological method. Especially during the years 1917–1921, Husserl introduced a set of new topics into his transcendental phenomenology: (i) genetic phenomenology, i.e. the idea of temporal genesis resulting in the theory of transcendental person (ii) the idea of lifeworld as the transcendental horizon of experience (iii) social ethics based on the idea of lasting intersubjective associations, i.e. the idea of a personality of a higher order. Let me focus on the first one.

The word "genesis" – as we may learn from the Ancient Greek *genesis* – refers basically to two different modes of being: birth (origin) and genera-

tion (the process of coming-into-being). In the Hellenic world, this term was associated also with family and ancestry, which bring the two ideas together: the story of ancestral lineage tells one on where one comes, but also how one has arrived there.[12] The same holds for the Biblical sense of the word that is most apparent in the *Book of Genesis*: alongside the event of creation of the world (the origin), the First Book of Moses informs us of the foundational relations of divine and earthly elements as well as of the complex dynamism of The Fall which has made us humans what we are, in this case, fallen, finite, and self-reflexive beings.

We find this double structure also in Husserl's works. For him, the notion of genesis refers both to the process of founding sense as well as its generation in the course of time. It denotes a whole set of transcendental-eidetic structures that guide the development of intentional relations, particular meanings and meaning-complexes. These relations and structures are at play in different levels of individual and interpersonal meaning-constitution and they also take part in temporal shaping of their correlative structures, i.e. human lifeworld and its cultural accomplishments.

The idea of *genetic phenomenology* appeared at the beginning of the 1920s, and Husserl introduced it as complementary to *static phenomenology*.[13] This distinction was also expressed in terms of "a genetic and a static method"[14], which referred to the same idea. Phenomenology, as Husserl understood it, was fundamentally a methodological and not a substantial notion, and it referred to a specific mode of inspection and not of content. As the manuscripts on the genetic method reveal, Husserl did not conceive the genetic dimension as a break with regard to the static analyses but it was to be understood as complimentary to these. Alongside with the "universal doctrine of consciousness" and the "constitutive phenomenology" studying "the general structures and modalities that encompass all

[12] As Steinbock notes, this twofold sense is also present in Husserl's recurring use of the notion of *Stamm* – translatable as "stem", "root", "genealogical lineage" etc. – referring to the different modes of generative transmittance of tradition (1995: 194ff.). Unlike in the case of the temporal genesis of individual consciousness, in which all institutions of meaning can – at least in principle – be located at a certain moment in time, in the case of intergenerational constitution, such univocal moments of institution cannot be easily acknowledged. I will return to this issue in part 4.

[13] HuaXIV: 34–43. See also HuaXV: 613ff. On the relation between static and genetic phenomenology, see especially Yamaguchi 1982: 11–14; Steinbock 1998b; Welton 2000: 1–10, 221ff.

[14] HuaXI: 336ff.

categories of apprehensions" – the static phenomenology – Husserl felt the need to add "a universal theory of genesis", which would investigate these structures with regard to their *origin* as well as the process or *origination*.[15]

To put it more simply, what the genetic dimension brought along was basically a broader notion of meaning-formation. Whereas the earlier analyses of intentionality had concentrated on the established correlation between the ego and the world (of *noesis* and *noema*) and the different modes of intentionality by which the validity and meaning of being is constituted, the genetic analyses turned their focus into the *dynamic character* of this process. Husserl wanted to understand how exactly different types of affectivity and activity follow and presuppose one another; in which way do particular modes of intentionality and meaning-constitution acquire for themselves a temporally lasting character. For this reason, he referred to genetic analyses as "explanatory" (*erklärende*) as distinguished from the "descriptive" (*beschreibende*) analyses of the static phenomenology – it explains *how* certain intentional relations and forms of experience emerge at a certain moment, and *why* they do so.[16] This form of explanation was not interested in empirical causality but what Husserl called relations of *motivation*, i.e. those founding relations that make possible the emergence of different attitudes.[17]

Husserl called the general form of this set of relations by the concept of "teleology" (*Teleologie*). This concept, however, was to be distinguished from the Aristotelian or other forms of mundane determinism necessarily guiding the development of the forms of nature (often called "ontogenesis").[18] Introduced as a part of the static analyses of consciousness, teleology referred to the basic associative or synthetic structure of conscious life: to say that our conscious life is "teleologically oriented" simply means that we do not live through mere fleeting experiences but our conscious life aims at creating concrete beings as unities. For instance, individual perceptions of particular "sides" of a thing have their *telos* in the constitution of "complete" objects.[19] Accordingly, instead of a separate cat-

[15] HuaXI: 340ff.
[16] HuaXI: 340. Cf. Steinbock 1998b: 128.
[17] HuaI: 109.
[18] HuaXI: 339.
[19] HuaI: 12–13; HuaIII: 213.

egory of being, teleology was to be understood as the "form of all forms" (*Form aller Formen*), that is, as the general structure of all meaning-constitution that we are constantly living through.[20] Already in *Ideas* I Husserl distinguished his own definition of teleology from all (Hegelian) interpretations referring to a kind of transcendent "theology" guiding the rational development of sense. "The ordering principle of the absolute must be found in the absolute itself", and this absolute was nothing else than transcendental subjectivity.[21] Being "teleological through and through", this subjectivity always embodies a certain constitutive history which delineates a horizon of possibilities for further development.[22]

The general form of this teleology is structured by what Husserl calls by the notion of *Stiftung* that could be translated as "institution", "establishment", or "foundation". It is perhaps instructive to note that although the notion itself refers to the positing of a particular validity or sense it is practically absent from the early static analyses of constitution.[23] Although this notion is very close to what Husserl, in the first volume of *Ideas*, calls "positing" (*Setzung*) or "thesis" (*Thesis*), it differs from these by paying attention to the temporal aspect of meaning-institution. The notion of *Stiftung* denotes is the abiding character of a particular affect, act or meaning-content, and as such, it opens up the problematic of the *temporal genesis of sense*. The notion of *Stiftung* introduces also a whole family of notions – *Urstiftung*, *Nachstiftung*, *Neustiftung*, and *Umstiftung* – which refer to the dynamic transformation of meaning-institution, its development both in the conscious life of an individual as well as in the field of cultural accomplishments.[24] Hence, it is possible to distinguish between two levels

[20] HuaXV: 380.

[21] "Im Absoluten selbst und in rein absoluter Betrachtung muß das ordnende Prinzip des Absoluten gefunden werden" (HuaIII: 121).

[22] HuaIX: 254.

[23] "Und so ist es also Gesetz: daß jede "Meinung" eine Stiftung ist […]" (HuaIV: 113); "So lebe ich in einem Milieu immerfort sich aneinander fügender, sich immer neu ergänzender In-Geltung-Setzung (Stiftung einer Seinsgültigkeit für mich, oder, in der geraden Blickrichtung auf das Gegenständliche, Stiftung für mich „daseiender" Erfahrungsgegenstände)" (HuaIX: 462–463).

[24] As James Dodd argues in his work *Crisis and Reflection*, we ought to avoid the temptation of conceiving the notion of *Stiftung* in "architectural terms", for instance, in the sense of Greeks laying the foundation for Western civilization. Whereas the architectural framework points towards the idea of rigid and solid foundations, Husserl's idea of original "institutions" make possible a wide variety of different beginnings. For Husserl, argues Dodd, "Greek philosophy is the "foundation" for a project, in that it represents the original motivation that projects a certain course of understanding." (Dodd 2004: 63). This begin-

of genetic phenomena: (i) the different temporal modes of consciousness and (ii) the meaning-formations produced by it (the process Husserl refers to as the "sedimentation of sense", *Sinnsedimentierung*).[25]

The notion of *Urstiftung*, "original institution"[26], is evidently the most common formulation that Husserl employs while speaking of meaning-constitution in genetic terms. With this notion, Husserl simply means the constitution of sense that takes place for the first time – for instance, as in Husserl's own example of familiarizing with previously unknown object such as scissors – creating a lasting validity and a horizon of expectation for future experience.[27] After this kind of institution, I do not have to create the meaning of scissors each time anew (e.g. learn how to use them), but the institution of their sense stays in my experience as an "abiding possession"[28]. Of course, the original sense or validity does not necessarily stay the same, for the meaning of things and places as well as our own convictions change constantly. Take the example of scissors: although I may have learned to use this object as a tool for cutting things, I may later discover that it is also suitable for curling ribbons. As this happens, the original institution undergoes what Husserl calls *Nachstiftung* or *Neustiftung*, "re-establishment" or "novel establishment", that is, a transformation

ning does not predelineate the results of this particular activity, but merely the attitude or a sense of project characteristic of it. On the concept of *Stiftung* and its connotations, see e.g. Held 1966: 37ff; Buckley 1992: 39.

[25] HuaVI: 380.

[26] See e.g. HuaI: 118, 143–146; HuaIV: 117; HuaXI: 203–207; HuaXXXIX: 1–6. *Urstiftung* as a generative notion, see HuaVI: 10–11, 72–73; HuaVIII: 17ff.; HuaXXIX: 15ff. At times, Husserl makes a distinction between an "absolute" and a "relative" *Urstiftung* – the first denoting the creation of a completely novel type of meaning, while the latter stands for a inception which is more or less conformed with an existing framework of sense. HuaXXIX: 421. This distinction is somewhat analogical to Husserl's distinction between *Urstiftung* and *Ur-urstiftung* within individual genesis. Cf. HuaXXXIX: 2.

[27] See HuaI: 141. Here, the existing scholarship points towards two competing interpretations. As Antony Steinbock puts it, the problem of primal institution belongs to "the sphere of genetic development which is fully passive" (1995, 41), whereas, in contrast, Philip J. Buckley calls *Urstiftung* "the moment of original authenticity", which "occurs […] through a deliberate act of self-reflection and direction of will, a new type of consciousness directed at a new type of intentional object is formed" (1992, 39). I believe this divergence is best explained in terms of two modes of consciousness: Although the original institution of sense takes place in an attentive mode of consciousness, its validity is attested inattentively.

[28] HuaI: 95. "Aber jeder Akt, "erstmalig" vollzogen, ist "Urstiftung" einer bleibenden Eigenheit, in die immanente Zeit hinein dauernd (im Sinne eines dauernden Identischen)" HuaIV, 311.

of sense that carries the former meaning with it.[29] The "original" function is not necessarily swiped away, but the object is bestowed with a new dimension of sense – one, which broadens its horizon of meaning.

Husserl calls this accumulation of sense also by the term sedimentation (*Sedimentierung*).[30] As a category of genetic phenomenology, sedimentation refers to the building up of sense that takes place in the course of time – a process, in which different acts or layers of meaning are stratified upon one another. The living body (*Leib*), for instance, is not a mere collection of different faculties – seeing, hearing, walking, touching etc. – but also a sedimented history of different capabilities. Individual skills and competences are never isolated faculties but they follow and presuppose one another.[31] For instance, children usually learn to walk first by acquiring themselves the necessary gross motor skills by crawling and standing against objects. These abilities, in their turn, are made possible by a series of kinaesthetic and proprioceptic faculties (the sense of balance, muscle memory etc.). And while children might not exercise the faculty of crawling very often after they have learned how to walk, it still remains as a latent possibility in the sedimented history of faculties.

Not all processes of sedimentation, however, take the form of simple accumulation. In some cases, it is exactly the forgetting or dismissal of a previous layer of meaning that makes possible the constitution of new ones. Having grown into a fear of heights, for instance, I must somehow get rid of this "habituation" (i.e. sense of fear) in order to acquire for myself the ability to climb again into high places. As Husserl suggested, it is exactly this type of forgetting that is not only characteristic, but absolutely essential to the development of scientific objectivity. As I showed in the previous part, Husserl conceived the Galilean discovery of mathematical ideality through the twofold process of discovering and concealing: although Galileo's projection of mathematical universe was able to create wonderful technique in order to predict the movement of natural objects, it was based on a simultaneous "forgetting" of the concrete subjective origin of this abstraction, including a wide variety of other types of idealities that we encounter within our concrete environment.

[29] See especially HuaIX: 212–215. Cf. HuaVI: 12, 72, 471; HuaXXIX: 417.
[30] See esp. HuaVI: 371ff. Cf. HuaXI: 180ff.; HuaMatVIII: 22ff.
[31] „Der Leib mit seinen abgegliederten Organen ist eine Sedimentierung von Vermögen des in solchen und solchen typischen Formen Tun-Könnens." HuaMatVIII: 345.

Especially in his later works, Husserl located the foundation of this tendency in the general structure of human language. Although he often emphasized the essentially expressive function of language, which makes possible mutual understanding on the basis of a shared symbolic reality, he also maintained that it would be one-sided to conceive language as a mere functional ability, an "organ of spirit"[32]. Not only is language a *medium* of understanding, but it also contains within itself a dimension of objective existence, which makes possible the sedimentation of meaning, and, correspondingly, the process of forgetting. Language, as it materializes itself in words and signs, is also a kind of *phraseology*, a collection of symbolic intentions whose meaning has been exhausted by repetition and convention. This is what Husserl in his essay on geometry called the "seduction of language" (*Verführung der Sprache*) – the general tendency of life to "relapse into a kind of talking and reading that is dominated purely by association".[33] What often hinders us from saying what we mean is not simply the common perception that "words are not enough": because language contains an inclination towards phrases and clichés – the conventional modes of saying with their associative structures –words are sometimes "too much". They invoke all sorts of cultural, historical and social connotations and associations, which are alien to the experience itself. Language, too, is a domain of passivity.

But what really constituted the novelty of the genetic method? Did Husserl not understand the process of constitution in terms of sedimentation already in his static analyses? Jacques Derrida, for one, has raised this question with regard to Husserl's earlier works. Already in the first

[32] HuaXIV: 205.

[33] "It is easy to see that even in [ordinary] human life, […] the originally intuitive life which creates its originally self-evident structures through activities on the basis of sense-experience very quickly and in increasing measure falls victim to the seduction of language. Greater and greater segments of this life lapse into a kind of talking and reading that is dominated purely by association […]." (**"Es ist leicht zu bemerken, daß im menschlichen** Leben schon, […] das ursprünglich anschauliche Leben, das in Aktivitäten auf dem Grunde sinnlicher Erfahrung seine ursprünglich evidenten Gebilde schafft, sehr schnell und in wachsendem Maße der Verführung der Sprache verfällt. Es verfällt in großen und immer größeren Strecken in ein rein von Assoziationen beherrschtes Reden und Lesen […]" HuaVI: 372.) We are perhaps reminded here of Hannah Arendt, who in her work on the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, pointed out the interesting connection between Eichmann's recurring use of worn-out phrases and clichés and his incapability to think in moral-ethical terms. On Eichmann's concurring use of "stock phrases" and "self-invented clichés", see Arendt 1977: 49.

part of Husserl's *Philosophy of Arithmetic* (1890) – a work that deals with the constitution of number through the synthetic activity of consciousness – Derrida argued that "the problem of genesis is posed in all its scope"[34]. Even these early analyses did not consider meaning-constitution merely in terms of truth and validity but with regard to relations of foundation: large numbers (or what Husserl calls "symbolic numbers"), for instance, refer back to the more simple, "authentic numbers" that can be evidently verified in simple experience (e.g. I can see four objects on the table). These simple numbers, in turn, have their foundation in the synthetic acts of consciousness, which make possible the very categories of unity and multiplicity. For this reason, also Philip Miller holds that "[counting and calculation] are both instances of what Husserl would later call 'sedimented' thinking".[35]

Indeed, in a letter to Paul Natorp from 1918, Husserl claimed that he had "overcome the level of static Platonism more than a decade ago, and set the idea of *transcendental genesis* as the main theme of phenomenology"[36]. As I see it, this "overcoming" did not relate to the early analyses *Philosophy of Arithmetic* or the *Logical Investigations* and the constitutional analyses presented in them. Even though they presented the constitution of sense as proceeding from the simple sensuous and categorical intuitions to the higher-order objectivities, they did not yet investigate into the dynamic unity of acts that constitute the temporal "figure" of conscious life itself. This point was also confirmed also by Husserl himself, who explicitly excluded the problems of genesis from the project of the *Investigations*.[37]

[34] Derrida 2003: 20.

[35] Miller 1992: 81. This point is also related to Husserl's alleged Platonism – or Platonic idealism –, according to which he would have considered the laws and concepts of logic (and arithmetic) as "ontologically" self-sufficient entities. However, as it is clear from *Prolegomena*, if Husserl's position could be described as Platonism, it is by character logical, not ontological. Ideal objects cannot be reduced to particular psychological states – this would amount to a form of psychologism –, but it makes no sense to speak of their truth without reference to their becoming evident in the sphere of conscious life. Husserl's own characterization of Platonism, see HuaXXII: 156–157; HuaVI: 367. Cf. HuaIII: 48–50; Tieszen 2010. HuaVI: 367. Cf. HuaIII: 48–50.

[36] "wobei ich noch bemerken darf, dass ich schon seit mehr als einem Jahrzehnt die Stufe des statischen Platonismus überwunden und der Phänomenologie als Hauptthema die Idee der transzendentalen Genesis gestellt habe" (R I Natorp, 29.VI.1918). Quoted in Gadamer GW 1: 247.

[37] See for instance HuaXIX/1: §35.

Two works are here of special importance. First of all, the topic temporality *per se* was introduced in the context of Husserl's lectures on time-consciousness of 1905, which discussed the temporal structure conscious life by analyzing the flow of experience. These analyses were complemented by the lecture series *Ding und Raum* (1907), which introduced the theme of so-called kinaesthetic syntheses that are essential to the constitution of thinghood, motion and spatiality. Although the notion of genesis was absent from both of these lecture series, it may well be accommodated into both: as Husserl put it in the *Cartesian Meditations*, the problem of time-consciousness – by portraying the present moment as something which necessarily embodies a retentional trace – belonged to the "first and most fundamental level of genetic problems"[38]. A similar point was also raised in a short 1916 addendum to the *Ding und Raum* lectures, where Husserl retrospectively referred to the kinaesthetic analyses as "genetic"[39]. What these analyses revealed was the basic structure of "associations" – a concept that Husserl picked up from Brentano – which structure the intentional objects according to coexistence and succession, and thus constitute the intentional flow as unitary. This is what Husserl later called the theory of *universal genesis* investigating infinite nexus of associative syntheses.[40]

There are actually two reasons why the theme of genesis is important in refuting the alleged subjective idealism in Husserl's phenomenology. First of all, by proceeding from the idea of inner time-consciousness to the problem of transcendental genesis, Husserl was able to avoid the idea according to which the transcendental ego would function as a mere formal principle of experiential unity. By calling forth the associative structure of consciousness, Husserl was able to confront a wholly new level of transcendental experience, that of *passive genesis* leading to a theory of the *transcendental person*. Secondly, by elaborating the manifold levels of passive genesis, Husserl was able to rearticulate his notion of constitution to encompass also those structures of meaning, which do not originate solely within our own conscious life. The topic of genesis provided the necessary

[38] HuaI: 169.
[39] HuaXVI: 369
[40] HuaI: 114; HuaIX: 534; HuaXI: 24.

link to the idea of *historical facticity*, our embeddedness in a tradition of values and validities. This discovery had extremely important consequences with regard to Husserl's notion of the transcendental as well as the absoluteness of the individual ego. Moreover, the novel historical dimension urged Husserl to rearticulate his idea of concreteness in phenomenology.

The first point can be illuminated by a comparison with Kant. As is well known, Kant approached the problem of subjectivity in terms of two necessary aspects: the transcendental and the empirical. It was one of the basic insights of Kant that we find ourselves as someone who perceive the world but also as worldly beings as such, i.e. both as constitutive as well as constituted beings. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* (first published in 1781), Kant introduced the division between the two aspects of the self basically in terms of form and matter, between the general principle of self-consciousness and its psychological manifestation in concrete experience.[41] According to this view, the ego "possesses" its experiences in two distinct, although closely related, regards: experiences are joined together by the unitary structure of consciousness, but they are also lived through as *my* personal experiences, my concrete perceptions, acts, and so on. The first regard – the transcendental – expresses the idea that our experience is always self-centered but it also allows to speak of consciousness as consisting of several simultaneous modes of experience. For instance, to hear a melody is not the same as to receive acoustic signals, but it means to constitute this tune as a meaningful piece of music – as something which arouses a certain emotion, as something which piques aesthetic interest.

To describe the specific mode of givenness in which the transcendental ego appears to itself, Kant employed the notion of *apperception* (literally: the "surplus" of perception): every experience is conceivable only as belonging to someone, as an experience of the "I".[42] With this idea of apperceptive self-awareness, Kant was able to avoid, first of all, Hume's

[41] This is the basic division presented in the part on "transcendental deduction" ("Transcendentale Deduction der reinen Verstandesbegriffe" §§15-27) in Akad.-A. III: 107ff. See especially III: 108.

[42] Akad.-A. IV: 223. "The "I think" must be able to accompany all my representations: for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing to me." ("Das: Ich denke, muss alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können; denn sonst würde etwas in mir vorgestellt werden, was gar nicht gedacht werden könnte, welches eben so viel heißt, als die Vorstellung würde entweder unmöglich, oder wenigsten für mich nichts sein.") Akad.A. III: 108.

empiricist conception according to which we would experience ourselves merely as objects of perception.[43] Secondly, although Kant was favorable towards the Cartesian *cogito* in the sense that an experience always entails a thinking "I", he denied that the transcendental ego could be understood in terms of a thinking substance. Instead of a mental being, the selfhood of the *cogito* was to be understood as a non-intuitable pole of experience lacking "any quality whatsoever"[44]. Thus in its apperceived form, Kant argued, the transcendental ego "contains nothing manifold".[45] Though it transcends the idea of a purely logical function (i.e. first-person pronoun) it remains essentially the same. Without this atemporal principle of experience there would be no givenness at all.[46]

In order to explain how the unified structure of conscious life come about, Kant needed to develop a notion of givenness that would describe how single perceptions or intuitions are transformed into coherent experiences. For this purpose, he invoked the notion of *synthesis* that described the conjunctive character of our intuitions and representations. Here, Kant distinguished between two kinds of synthesis, those of sensuous experience – bringing together particular intuitive contents – and those of conceptual-discursive thinking, which bring these contents under logical notions. The sensuous synthesis was developed as a part of Kant's theory of transcendental aesthetics, which, as an investigation of sensuous intuition and its pure (i.e. non-derivative) forms of space and time, was to be distinguished from the transcendental analytics that deal with the categories of reason as well as the transcendental dialectics operating with the supreme realities of autonomous ego, world and God.

Kant called the basic structure of this synthesis *association*, which, unlike for Hume, was not to be understood as a psychological feature, but as an a priori, transcendental function of consciousness. Instead of merely connecting single intuitions to one another, Kant understood the sensuous association as a constructive faculty, which makes possible the higher-order categorical syntheses of reason. Kant spoke here of a "figurative

[43] "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other (…) I never can catch myself without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception." Hume 1888: 252.
[44] "[…] ohne die mindeste Eigenschaft desselben zu bemerken." Akad.-A IV: 224
[45] "[…] das Ich, welches im ersteren Verstande gar keine Mannigfaltigkeit in sich faßt." Akad.-A III: 511. Cf. Akad.-A IV: 224.
[46] Akad.-A. IV: 117; Akad.-A. III: 157.

synthesis" or a *synthesis speciosa*, which, by conjoining sensuous experiences on the basis of their likeness and resemblance, gives the pre-predicative experience its peculiar structure.[47]

Accordingly, Husserl credited Kant for his unique attempt of describing the field of sensuous intuition not only as a raw data-like givenness but as a *productive activity*, which founds the predicative forms of experience. In other words, Kant succeeded in transferring the field of receptivity from the sphere of mere psychology to that of transcendental investigation. However, because of the rather constrained function that Kant attributed to the figurative synthesis, he avoided its crucial implications for the constituting ego. "[Kant's] brilliant doctrine of the transcendental necessity of association is not supported by a phenomenological eidetic analysis", Husserl argued – "It does not investigate what is actually at issue under the rubric of association with respect to elementary facts and essential laws, and thereby making understandable the genetic unitary structure of pure subjective life"[48]. In this regard, Kant did not bring together the associative synthesis with the temporal structure of transcendental consciousness: his account failed to question how individual associations provide the transcendental life with its peculiar shape.[49] This was due to the fact that for Kant, temporality was inherently a feature of the empirical consciousness: as a general principle of experience, the transcendental consciousness is fundamentally atemporal.

Husserl's phenomenology – which took its point of departure from the subject as concrete and personal – implied a severe challenge for the Kantian concept of the transcendental. Not only did Husserl's concept of the transcendental denote the structures through which the ego establish-

[47] Akad.-A. III: 119. This synthesis was not to be confused with imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), which denotes the *reproductive* capacity of transcendental apperception. See Ibid.: 120–122.

[48] HuaXI: 119

[49] See e.g. Kant's Akad.-A. IV: 91–92: "Actual experience, which is constituted by apprehension, association (reproduction), and finally recognition of appearances, contains in recognition, the last and highest of these *merely empirical elements of experience*, certain concepts which render possible the formal unity of experience, and therewith all objective validity (truth) of empirical knowledge." ("Die wirkliche Erfahrung, welche aus der Apprehension, der Association (der Reproduction), endlich der Recognition der Erscheinungen besteht, enthält in der letzteren und höchsten (*der bloss empirischen Elemente der Erfahrung*) Begriffe, welche die formale Einheit der Erfahrung und mit ihr alle obiective Gültigkeit (Wahrheit) der empirischen Erkentniß möglich machen.") My italics.

es itself as a unity of experiences but also as a *unity of a temporal flow*. This flow, argued Husserl, is always *personal* in the sense that it belongs to an "I" but also in the sense that it generates a manifold of eidetic structures by which the transcendental subject finds itself *as particular*. This was one of the major transformations in Husserl's notion of the transcendental with regard to the classic Kantian definition: the transcendental ego is not an empty logical principle but always and inextricably *my own*.

This transformation, whose implications were vast, led Husserl to develop a unique theory of *transcendental person* with its abiding style and habitus. We do not merely "live through" individual acts, but these acts have the tendency of creating lasting tendencies, patterns and intentions, which become a part of my personal history. These tendencies may manifest themselves, for instance, in the form of lasting "convictions" (*Überzeugungen*), a "decisions" (*Entscheidungen*), or "resolution of the will" (*Willenentschluss*)[50] which are not simple empirical generalizations: a lasting conviction, for instance, has a general structure whether it has been acquired through seeing, hearing, reading etc. As such, these convictions endow my transcendental ego with its essential uniqueness, its personal history and character. This is why Husserl stresses that the notions of habitus and style should not be taken in their everyday sense of custom and routine nor should they be equated with memory or recollection. Instead, they should be understood as transcendental features that belong primordially to the sphere of pure ego.[51]

It is perhaps surprising that in order to describe both the unified character of the transcendental life and its essential openness towards other subjects, Husserl employed the Leibnizian concept of *monad*. Without going to further details on the history of this concept, we should pay attention to at least two features that Leibniz discusses in his *Monadology* (paragraph §18). Monads, argues Leibniz, are a form of substance, and following the Aristotelian dictum, they can be understood according to an "entelechy", that is, as striving towards their full actuality or essence. However – and this is where Leibniz breaks off with Aristotle – "they have a certain self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) which makes them the sources of their

[50] HuaXXXIX: 47.
[51] HuaIV: 111.

internal activities"[52]. And this is what Leibniz means with the well-known idea of "windowlessness": not only do monads "stand outside" the empirical causal processes but they contain the forms of genesis and teleology within themselves.[53]

So it is for Husserl: "Under the rubric of monad we have had in mind the unity of its living becoming, its history"[54]. Instead of a mere pole of experience, the monad is a dynamic unity of experiences, "as continuously becoming in time"[55] with its sedimented history which allows the future possibilities to come about. Thus teleology, understood as the general structure of the monad, is not an objectively given purpose but an immanent principle of development.

Neither for Leibniz nor Husserl did this idea of windowlessness equal with complete isolation. By excluding the causal relations between monads, both of them were able to take the question of their interrelation into another dimension, that of transcendental investigation (although with regard to Leibniz, this term should be understood in its pre-Kantian sense). As Leibniz famously put it, every monad "expresses" the whole world by "mirroring" every other monad so that while sustaining its autonomy and particularity, it has potentially the totality of monads within itself. It was exactly this idea that came to be one of the central motives of Husserl's transcendental monadology. Instead of being mere distinct objects of experience, the others are embedded in my experience not only as objects but as someone who participate in the process of constitution. Actually, it is only through others that I am able to constitute for myself an objective reality, which makes possible social interaction in the pregnant (i.e. active) sense of the word.

Accordingly, it is understandable that in one of his earliest characterizations of the genetic phenomenology, Husserl introduced the topic of intersubjectivity in terms of a twofold monadic interrelation – passive and active genesis:

> [We are led to ask:] In what sense can the genesis of a monad be implicated in the genesis of another, and in what sense can a unity

[52] Leibniz 1898: 229.
[53] Leibniz 1898: 219.
[54] „Aber wir haben jetzt unter dem Titel Monade ins Auge gefasst die Einheit ihres lebendigen Werdens, ihrer Geschichte." HuaXIV: 36.
[55] Ibid.

> of genesis, according to [genetic] laws, combine a multiplicity of monads?
>
> [i. In the sense of a] *passive genesis*, on the one hand, which in the case of the constitution of an anthropological world refers to the constituted physiological processes and to their conditions in the unity of the physical world with the lived-body of another;
>
> [ii. In the sense of] *active genesis*, on the other, which refers to the form of motivation of my thinking, valuing, willing through that of others.
>
> Thus, considering the individuality of the monad leads to the question of the individuality of a multiplicity of coexisting monads, monads genetically connected to one another [...].[56]

Thus, what Husserl opened with the problem of genesis was nothing less than the intrinsic "communalization" (*Vergemeinschaftung*) of the transcendental subject: the fundamental openness of transcendental life towards other subjects, its coalescence in different social units – personal relationships, communities, civilizations. Again, it is possible to elucidate Husserl's position in a clear contrast to the Kantian concept of the transcendental. For Kant the problem of intersubjectivity was basically excluded from the transcendental analyses of *Critique of Pure Reason*, and it did not really become relevant until the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) and the *Critique of Judgment* (1790) with respect to the concrete phenomena of respect, love, aesthetic taste, culture and so on. Despite the insightful character of these analyses, Kant considered the question of other subjects primarily in practical-ethical terms, as a question of a just and responsive relation towards other people. He did not endow the other subjects any kind of role in the transcendental structures of constitution, but the doctrine of categories which explained the constitution of objectivity and the world was to be understood solely on the basis of the ego and its relation to the

[56] "Und mit all dem haben wir verbunden die Fragen, in welchem Sinn die Genesis einer Monade in die einer anderen hineingreifen und eine Einheit der Genesis eine Vielheit von Monaden gesetzlich verbinden kann; einerseits die passive Genesis, die im Fall der Konstitution einer anthropologischen Welt (bzw. einer animalischen) auf die konstituierten physiologischen Prozesse und die Bedingtheit derselben in der Einheit der physischen Welt mit dem Gegenleib verweist, andererseits die aktive Genesis in der Form der Motivation meines Denkens, Wertens, Wollens durch das anderer. Also die Betrachtung der Individualität der Monade führt auf die Frage der Individualität einer Vielheit koexistierender und miteinander genetisch verbundener Monaden [...]" HuaXI: 342–343.

world. For this reason, Husserl was able to call the Kantian ego fundamentally "isolated".[57] Kant did not investigate into the basic structures of *passive genesis*, or, to be more precise, his analyses failed to recognize the essentially intersubjective character of this domain: besides the associative and synthetic activity of the individual, our concrete world-constitution entails a necessary relation towards the other subjects without which no idea of objectivity or world could ever come about. (I will return to this idea in Chapter 2.2).

Remaining solely within this description, one might still confront the critique proposed by Foucault, according to which Husserlian phenomenology would still resolve itself "into a description [...] of actual experience, and into an ontology of the unthought that automatically short-circuits the primacy of the 'I think'."[58] This is to say that although Husserl provides us with a transformed notion of *cogito*, which finds itself not as a mere center of conscious life but as being essentially open towards a horizon of alien experience, this analysis is not enough: it falls short with regard to the historical, social and political processes of meaning-formation and their concrete practices or "techniques". It is only on the basis of these conditions, Foucault claims, that we are able to question the peculiar identity, unity and self-understanding of the human being.

Although Foucault's interpretation of Husserl's concept of constitution seems to refer to an idea of active "construction" performed by the ego – an idea that Husserl refuted in several occasions – it is also possible to confront the criticism on the essential egocentrism of phenomenology from another, more constructive point of view. While it is certainly evident that Husserl never gave up on the fundamentally idealistic undertone of phenomenology, I believe this idealism – like phenomenology itself – was to be understood as primarily methodological.[59] In other words, for Husserl the specific "primacy of the *cogito*" was nothing more than the necessary methodological insistence to approach the constitution of objectivity, meaning and sense starting from an experiential, first-person point of view. It was not an ontological commitment concerning the fun-

[57] HuaXXIX: 120. See also Zahavi 2001:17.
[58] Foucault 2002: 355.
[59] As Husserl puts it in the Crisis, the *epoche* creates a unique philosophical "solitude" (*Einsamkeit*), but merely as a "methodological requirement" for a genuinely radical philosophy (HuaVI: 188). This point has been emphasized also by Carr 1987: 68.

daments of reality as such; the world is not a simple construction of the subject but it also has a form of existence that transcends this. Although all meanings and meaning-formations gain their validity and sense ultimately through the conscious life of the individual, it is possible to discuss their existence and temporal development *apart* from it, for instance, in the form of cultural objectivities, accomplishments, written documents, and so on. As I will argue in chapter 2.4, instead of a one-sided, accomplishing relation between individual and culture, Husserl conceived this relation as *essentially reciprocal* – as a specific instantiation of the "paradox of subjectivity" arguing for the *constitutive* as well as *constituted* character of human existence.

The primacy of the individual ego in Husserl's phenomenology was called into question, above all, by the problem of *generativity* (*Generativität*).[60] As the terminological affinity yields up, Husserl introduced the problem of generativity as mounting from the general problem of genesis. With generativity, Husserl basically denoted the temporal modes of meaning-constitution that take place in the interpersonal and intergenerational forms of co-existence – in different associations, communities, cultures and all kinds of traditions. In this regard, the domain of generativity denoted nothing less than the "unity of historical development in its widest sense"[61] – those structures of genetic development that constitute the unified character of traditionality and historicity in general. Against the Hegelian idea of universal history proceeding through the development of spirit, Husserl did not conceive generativity primarily as a universal, formal principle of historical development.[62] Instead, as in the case of

[60] On the idea of generativity, see Introduction. Before introducing the notion of generativity, Husserl occasionally referred to problems of "communal genesis" (*Gemeinschaftsgenesis*), see HuaXIV: 221. In *Crisis*, the problem of generativity was introduced as a general structure of transcendental historicity proceeding through a "[…] transcendental inquiry which starts from the essential forms of human existence in society, in personalities of a higher order, and proceeds back to their transcendental and thus absolute signification." („[…] der transzendentalen Rückfragen von den Wesensformen menschlichen Daseins in Gesellschaftlichkeit, in Personalitäten höherer Ordnung, auf ihre transzendentale und somit absolute Bedeutung.") HuaVI: 191–192. Cf. HuaXXIX: 37, 60ff.

[61] HuaXXIX: 63.

[62] As Merleau-Ponty suggests in his lectures on "institution" and "passivity", it was exactly due to this essential incompleteness that Husserl went on to develop a phenomenology of culture instead of spirit: "The traditionality of consciousness means forgetfulness of origins, hands over a tradition, founds it. And correlatively, there is the tradition received, i.e. the possibility of reactivation. […] Not philosophy of participation in the one, of intellectual creation, of Spirit, but philosophy of culture." Merleau-Ponty 2010: 52–53.

individual consciousness, generativity was to be approached through its particular instantiations in individual traditions. As human subjects, we are constantly participating in several generative traditions, which, despite their variations (e.g. family, nation, civilization), all share the general structure of descending and evolving, that is, they are all something passed forward.

Within the existing Husserl-scholarship, the problems of historicity and tradition have often been treated as secondary issues, as merely complimentary analyses with regard to the core questions of phenomenology. If we adhere only to Husserl's published works, this conception is somewhat justified, for the problem of generativity – excluded from the scope of static phenomenology – is most often introduced only in passing. In the *Cartesian Meditations*, the only reference to this phenomenon is made only at the final section of this work (§61) where Husserl refers to the "*genetic problems of birth and death* and the *generative nexus of psychophysical being*" as belonging to a "higher level" of investigation, presupposing "a tremendous labor of explication pertaining to the lower spheres"[63]. Respectively, in the paragraph §55 of *Crisis*, Husserl introduces the problem of generativity with the metaphor of levels (*Stufen*).[64] While the problems of communal and historical genesis represent the highest stiles of the phenomenological stairway, we must walk them backwards in order to arrive at the fundamental levels of world-constitution.

Again, this idea of a specific order should be understood as primarily *methodological*. As phenomenologically philosophizing subjects, everything that makes sense must be examined beginning with our conscious life; however, this does not mean that all of our constitutional analyses would remain solely on the level of individual experience. The transcendental ego, as Husserl puts it, is indeed the final absolute – *but it is not the sole absolute*. To be more precise, the ego is not the sole modality of phenomenological absolute, but rather an abstraction from what Husserl calls the "concrete absolute"[65] that is constituted within transcendental intersub-

[63] "Nur daß damit freilich noch die oben bezeichneten generativen Probleme von Geburt und Tod und Generationszusammenhang der Animalität nicht berührt sind, die offenbar einer höheren Dimension angehören und eine so ungeheure auslegende Arbeit der unteren Sphären voraussetzen, daß sie noch lange nicht zu Arbeitsproblemen werden können." HuaI: 169.

[64] HuaVI: 191. On the metaphor of levels, see e.g. Depraz 1995: 6ff.

[65] Cf. "Die Vielheit des Subjekte als das konrete Absolute", HuaXIV: 272.

jectivity. In other words, by focusing solely on the constitutive activity of the ego, we abstract from the overall processes of meaning-constitution, which, in the case of our worldly experience, are inextricably intersubjective. They are realized in different historical, cultural, and socio-political matrixes. How exactly Husserl worked out the difference between the levels of subjective, intersubjective and communal spheres of constitution becomes evident as soon as we probe more deeply into the Husserlian social ontology – however, we must first pay attention to the significant methodological possibility that the generative dimension brings about.

Let us first take seriously the claim made in Fifth Meditation: why exactly are birth and death introduced here in connection to the problem of generativity? Are these really problems of the *transcendental* genesis? We encounter here one of the major controversies with regard to Husserl's phenomenological project, namely, the question on the transcendental significance of birth and death. Traditionally, the alleged dismissal of human finitude has been seen one of the major weaknesses of Husserl's project – an accusation that can be traced back to the first overviews of Husserl's phenomenological project, such as Levinas' 1940 essay "The Work of Edmund Husserl".[66] These conceptions rely often on the view that Husserl, while recognizing the unquestioned finitude of human existence, had to

[66] In this essay, Levinas credited Husserl for dissociating his own phenomenological view of consciousness (i.e. consciousness as concrete and singular) from the abstract notion of *Geist* of the German idealism. Despite this emphasis on the singularity of the ego, Husserl did not clarify, Levinas claims, the fundamental connection between singularity and facticity – and thus the problem of mortality: "How this individuality of consciousness in general, divested of all the "facticity" of birth and death, can be individual – this is a problem Husserl does not deal with, at least in his published works" (Levinas 1998: 75). According to him, it was only Heidegger who first introduced the "constitutive" significance of these ideas through the analysis of *Dasein* and its specific finitude in "being-towards-death" (GA 2: §§51-53). However, since the publication of several manuscripts dealing with problematic mortality, several commentators have rectified this view by elucidating the unique role of these notions in Husserl's body of work. Zahavi, for one, has argued for the constitutive significance of mortality on the basis of Husserl's emphasis on corporeality, i.e. as the necessary corollary of the finitude and singularity of the transcendental subject (Zahavi 2003: 108). Here, Zahavi confirms the basic argument presented by Steinbock (1995: 189ff.) according to which birth and death could be acknowledged as transcendental notions only in the context of generative phenomenology. As phenomenological categories, birth and death allow themselves to be distinguished from sleep only within the context of interpersonal and intergenerational activity, in which the irreversibility of death – and the genuine singularity of the transcendental ego – can be acknowledged. Cf. HuaXXIX: 87: "Zur transzendentalen Intersubjektivität in ihrem Kern gehört das Generative mit Geburt und Tod […]."

exclude the topics of birth and death from the field of the transcendental. As Husserl put it: "Transcendental life and the transcendental ego cannot be born; only the human being in the world can be born"[67] – the transcendental ego stands always between the horizons of past and future, of retentional and protentional awareness, without which any idea of consciousness would be conceivable.[68] In consequence, we cannot imagine neither its inception nor cessation in a strictly phenomenological sense, for their givenness would of course presume the intentional flow of a transcendental ego to which they are given. Thus mortality, according to this view, stands as the final gatekeeper between the transcendental ego and the empirical person.

With regard to the topic of finitude, however, we should acknowledge a certain shift of position in Husserl's thinking. From the beginning of the 1930s, Husserl came to realize that both birth and death do indeed connote a certain transcendental significance, that is, they both have an essential role in the process of world-constitution. They do so, however, not as occurrences within experience – death cannot be intuitively experienced – but as a kind of horizontal structure delimiting the span of our lives within a socio-historical, generative context.[69] Following the Heideggerian dictum, it might be possible to speak of "impossible possibilities" that are never straightforwardly given but that function as kinds of continuously postponed horizons of human existence. However, the similarities stop here. Whereas for Heidegger, death functions as the "ownmost" (*eigenste*) possibility of human existence, which *singularizes and singles out* the human being from the forgetfulness of everyday sociality, for Husserl the order is reversed. It is particularly through the dimension of *intersubjective generativity* that birth and death have any significance for me as transcendental categories. It is not until I grow into the idea of historical community that this horizontal structure of finitude is realized.[70] *I grow into my own mortality through others* – without this intersubjective dimension, the transcendental significance of finitude falls short.

[67] „[…] transzendentale Ich, nicht das empirische Welt-Ich, das sehr wohl sterben kann." HuaXI: 379.
[68] This point is discussed also by Heinämaa 2010: 88.
[69] On birth and death as limit-phenomena, see Steinbock 1998b: 305ff.
[70] HuaXV: 140. On Husserl's critique of Heidegger's concept of death, see HuaXXIX: 332

Thus, from the perspective of phenomenological theory of the subject, the topic of generativity entailed a significant distention of the scope of meaning-constitution. Alongside with the forms of meaning-constitution that have their origin in the conscious life of the individual, Husserl began to discuss also those forms of meaning and sense that have their *genuine* origin outside of the activity of the individual ego. These forms, rather than being actively instituted through particular *Urstiftungen*, are essentially "appropriated" (*übernehmen*, *aufnehmen*). This means that they involve an element of asymmetry and partiality in regard to the original institution of sense – an asymmetry that originates from our mortality and finitude.[71] But it is exactly this partiality that endows the human traditions their unique character as something "passed forward". Accordingly, instead of delineating the temporality of individual traditions merely in terms of Hegelian dialectics (thesis–antithesis–synthesis), Husserl emphasized the fundamental elements of activating, forgetting and emptying of sense characteristic of the passing forward of traditions. It is exactly this elementary structure which endows the individual traditions with their specific "periodization" (*Periodisierung*). In the similar manner as the retentions and recollections of the individual have a tendency to build as sociative groupings by virtue of their structural affinity – "memories of childhood", "times of happiness", and so on – traditions are likewise structured by the successful processes of activating and deactivating of sense and meaning.

To put it in simpler terms, what the dimension of generativity opened up was the idea of *inheritance* as the essential condition of human existence.[72] Becoming a part of a human community that transcends my finite being means that we are swept into this complex process of tradition precisely in the form of "passing forward" (Lat. *tradere*) of sense: we find ourselves in a specific historical situation defined by a nexus of cultural objectivities and practices, a certain socio-symbolic order and political institutions. The whole idea of inheritance means that as finite beings, we are never fully on our own but necessarily forced to carry the weight of the past. The inherited sense and meaning is never given to us in full

[71] See especially HuaXIV: 222; HuaIV: 119. Cf. Steinbock 1995: 196.
[72] Cf. HuaXXIX: 51 where Husserl makes a distinction between the past as an "idol" (*Vorbild*) and a "decedent [...] through its will" ("Erblasser [...] durch ihr Testament").

intuitive evidence; we are in touch with signs and symbols whose world has permanently deceased, we are addressed by narratives that have been handed down to us. Thus as Husserl puts in a late manuscript: "The development of the future is the task of the living, but the future is realized only through a permanent form of activity, which has the character of reawakenment of the spirit of the deceased […]"[73]. In other words, since our embeddedness in a world of sense is dependent on the process of origination, the only way of bringing this condition to light is to engage in a conversation with the past.

"Men make their own history", Marx once wrote, "but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past". As Husserl would have put it, this process is not one of simple mediation of sense but of constant transformation, forgetting, negotiating. "Inherited tradition (*Erbschaft*) is not repetition", Husserl writes, "but intentional agreement, conversion, *concealment*, and even transformation through this concealment"[74]. Not only is history a series of crises in the sense of "losses of meaning", but it is also a series of deliberate oblivions, which make possible the emergence of novel meanings and attitudes. For this reason, our contemporary age stresses so vigorously what especially Germans call the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, "the control" or "mastery" over the past, referring to the indispensable role of historical narratives in cultural, political, and social reality. There are some things that we must not forget; there are others that we ought to.

I will return to this topic of historical teleology in chapter 4. Now it suffices to say that although Husserl sometimes refers to the Kantian idea of the "novel" (*Roman*) of history, one ought to be careful in employing this term in this connection. Although history does pertain within itself a pre-given, *a priori* structure, we should abstain ourselves from committing to any Kantian-Hegelian ideas of "Theodicy" or "Cunning of reason" as the underlying narratives of historical development.[75] History is, as Hus-

[73] „Die Entwicklung der Zukunft ist Sache der Lebenden, ihre Fortbildung ist es, die Zukunft schafft. Aber die Zukunft wird durch eine ständige Aktivität, die den Charakter einer Wiederverlebendigung des Geistes der Verstorbenen hat […]." HuaVI: 489.

[74] "Aber Erbschaft ist nicht Wiederholung, sondern intentionale Einigung, Wandlung, Verdeckung und eben Wandlung durch diese Verdeckung." HuaMatVIII: 436.

[75] On Husserl's use of the "history a priori", see HuaVI: 362–363, 380.

serl put it, "from the start nothing else than the vital movement of the co-existence and the interweaving of original formations and sedimentations of meaning"[76] – and as such, it can only be approached by proceeding backwards from the present moment. This teleology, however, should be divested of its "deterministic" features. Its sole necessity lies in the motivational structures that regulate the development of meaning and sense. From a transcendental perspective, history knows no necessities.

It is possible to observe why the topic of generativity entailed also a novel methodological approach, that of teleological-historical reflection (as entertained especially in the context of *Crisis*). Once we acknowledge that our beliefs, values, practices have their origin not only in ourselves but in the tradition preceding us, we are prompted to proceed from the constituted, ready-made sense back to its process of constitution. It was exactly for this reason that Husserl began to define his late "teleological-historical reflections" through the notions of "questioning back" (*Rückfrage*), "destruction" (*Abbau*) or "reconstruction" (*Rekonstruktion*). Thus methodologically, what we have is not the accused "primacy of the 'I think'", but the primacy of the factical, historical and social matrix of sense – in which we ourselves belong – whose becoming and sense the phenomenologist sets out to discover.[77]

Heidegger once wrote that as soon as we understand the essentially historical character of human essence, the question of "What is human being?" is turned into the form: "Who is human being?"[78] The question of temporality implicates a transition from *quidittas* or whatness to *quissity*, whoness (*Werheit*)[79] bringing about a new understanding of human existence that is not categorical but existential – it involves a specific reflexive stance towards its own being. In other words, it seeks to answer not only the question of what is a human being, but *who* he or she is. This transition, I believe, can also be located within Husserl's own project. What the transition from static to genetic phenomenology finally entailed was a transformed sense of human being as such – one that seeked to investigate

[76] "Geschichte ist von vornherein nichts anderes als die lebendige Bewegung des Miteinander und Ineinander von ursprünglicher Sinnbildung und Sinnsedimentierung." HuaVI: 380.
[77] See e.g. HuaVI: 191–192, 489; HuaXXIX: 47.
[78] Heidegger, GA 40: 110
[79] Heidegger, GA 24: 169

the normative character of action not merely according to a set of possible choices but in regard to the personal history of one's acquired faculties and capabilities. Unlike Kant, who defined the categorical imperative in terms of infinite repeatability of a particular act, Husserl, through his genetic conversion, began to understand ethical behavior in regard to one's personal history of habituation and sedimentation. By doing so, Husserl was able to acknowledge an idea of ethical subject, which does not do away with the differences in personal features or individual capabilities but which can only be understood only in relation to this individuality. This transition can be understood in terms of *concretization*.

Recall that for Husserl, phenomenology was to be understood as a "science of the concrete". But what really is concrete? In the static analyses of *Logical Investigations* and of *Ideas* I, Husserl had distinguished between two types of essences, self-sufficient and non-independent (i.e. relational). Whereas the idea of number "1", for instance, can be conceived in its own terms (the primal unity of counting), without any reference to other essences, most of the essential determinations we encounter in our daily lives are of another kind. A melody, for instance, can appear as "wistful" or "elegiac", which are determinations that cannot perhaps be understood without reference to sadness, longing, feeling of nostalgia, hope etc., that is, purely in their own terms. Husserl had employed the notion of concrete or *concretum* to describe the first category, that is, those essences (or entities) that can be conceived as absolutely self-sufficient – and in the early works such as *Ideas I* he had reserved the category of *abstractum* to the latter forms, those of non-independent essences.[80]

However, as Husserl confessed in one of the earliest manuscripts on the idea of genetic phenomenology, as soon as the dimension of temporal genesis sets in, "one cannot identify the notion of "the independent" with "the concrete" like I did in the *Logical Investigations*".[81] Why not? Because even those essential forms, that the static analyses had discovered as self-sufficient, have a history through which they have been uncovered – a history that is more fundamental and more concrete than what the static method had been able to appreciate. For instance, arriving at a concrete

[80] See e.g. HuaIII: 35ff.

[81] "[…] alles Konkrete in der Monade ist unselbständig, und es zeigt sich, dass man den Begriff des Selbständigen nicht mit dem des Konkreten identifizieren kann wie ich in den *Logischen Untersuchungen*." HuaXIV: 37.

notion of philosophy presupposes not only that we single it out from the natural or the personalistic attitudes, but that we investigate its historical transmittance – *the way it has been handed down to us* – by locating this process in a genetic-generative context. As I will show in the next chapter, this transition indicated also a growing significance of transcendental intersubjectivity as the most concrete domain of meaning-constitution.

It was perhaps Merleau-Ponty who was the first to truly realize the historical-critical potential of Husserl's late phenomenology. In the preface to his *Phenomenology of Perception* Merleau-Ponty referred to the broadened notion of intentionality in Husserl's later writings and credited these analyses for discovering a novel dimension of phenomenological philosophy – a "phenomenology of origins".[82] What this idea seemed to provide, was a transformed notion of meaning-constitution, one, which does not assume the traditional metaphysical priority of self-sufficient essences but works to appreciate the genesis of sense in its historically transmitted, intertwined character. As Merleau-Ponty asks:

> Should the starting-point for the understanding of history be ideology, or politics, or religion, or economics? Should we try to understand a doctrine from its overt content, or from the psychological makeup and the biography of its author? We must seek an understanding from all these angles simultaneously, everything has meaning, and we shall find this same structure of being underlying all relationships. All these views are true provided that they are not isolated, that we delve deeply into history and reach the unique core of existential meaning which emerges in each perspective.[83]

The affinity of Husserl's late phenomenology with Hegelian dialectics is precisely the idea that philosophy should start *with the present* and *from the present* with all of its existing realities, tasks, contradictions and paradoxes – because their intertwinement provides us with the *most concrete level of investigation*. As Husserl himself put it in the beginning of the *Crisis*, phenomenology was to be understood in relation to the "struggles of our time" (*Kämpfe unserer Zeit*) and to the historical and critical retrospection (*Rückbesinnung*) that is necessary in order to work out a radical self-understanding.[84] As I will show later in detail, Husserl conceived this undertak-

[82] Merleau-Ponty 1962: xx.
[83] Merleau-Ponty 1962: xxi.
[84] HuaVI: 16. Cf. the introductory part in chapter 1.

ing as pertaining within itself a normative element, calling forth the problem of renewal of tradition. For now, it suffices to conclude that if one is willing to pursue a truly phenomenological investigation in a Husserlian fashion, one cannot give up on the universal teleology of history, because it is only through the quest of this teleology that one is capable of grasping the possibilities of present thinking.

After these reflections, one might be allured to claim that once Husserl had introduced the dimension of generativity into phenomenology, he could no longer account for any kind of idea of infinity that concerns the transcendental subjectivity. However, as I would like to argue, rather than turning this idea down completely Husserl aimed at locating this notion elsewhere, namely, in the field of culture and communal life. Accordingly, this is what makes his analyses of Europe relevant in this perspective: the novel idea of philosophy that Husserl saw as beginning with the Greeks opened up a possibility of a completely different kind of genesis, that of *infinite teleology*, which seeks to guide the development of humanity with regard to ideal goals. Before we engage in a discussion on the peculiar structure of this teleology, we must first provide a reading of its conditions of possibility. It must be asked how exactly does the genesis of a higher-order come about in the concrete process of intersubjective life?

2.2. Transcendental Social Ontology: Beyond Interaction

Husserl's earliest manuscripts that deal with the topic of intersubjectivity date back already to 1905.[85] The early analyses take their point of departure from the role of other subjects in the field of individual experience, more precisely, from the observation that the others are not merely a part of the world, but they appear to me as containing a unique inner depth. In its basic form, this depth is based on the perception according to which the other subjects carry within themselves a personal world of experience into which I have no direct access. Despite

[85] On the early development of intersubjectivity, see Iso Kern's introduction in HuaXIII: xxiv–xliii.

its unattainability, this world is by no means without significance. It plays a crucial role in my personal world-constitution. It is exactly through this dimension of alien experience that I am able to have a world, which makes possible communal co-operation and the development of human culture.

With regard to the Husserl's early analyses on intersubjectivity, we are able to distinguish basically between two lines of approach. First of all, since the manner of givenness that characterizes other subjects differs radically from that of natural and cultural objects, Husserl wanted to find a suitable conceptual approach in order to account for this givenness. Around 1908, this problem was first answered under the title of "empathy" (*Einfühlung*) and "alien experience" (*Fremderfahrung*): even though I have no direct access to the experience of the other, I can relate to his or her situation.[86] By taking his point of departure from the idea of empathy – and for instance, not from Hegelian recognition (*Anerkennung*) – Husserl wanted to distinguish himself from the Neo-Kantian tradition for which the topic of intersubjectivity had become primarily a political-ethical problem dealing with the questions of political legitimacy, of state and civil society. As Husserl insisted, the problem of communality was to be located in the very heart of theoretical reason – more precisely, to the constitution of the common world – which provides the basic conditions for practical co-operation.[87] Here, Husserl's work was influenced especially by the so-called Munich phenomenologists – a group of students assembled around the Neo-Kantian philosopher Theodor Lipps who had made significant contributions to the theory of empathy.[88]

Secondly, beginning from the early 1910s, Husserl began to sketch what he called a phenomenological "social ontology" (*soziale Ontologie*), an investigation of those forms of givenness that characterize our sense of

[86] HuaXIII: 3, 8–9, 17ff., 42–54.

[87] As Husserl puts it in an appendix to *Crisis*: "We already have a certain "community" in being mutually "there" for one another in the surrounding world (the other in my surrounding world) — and this always means being physically, bodily there." ("Eine gewisse „Gemeinschaft" haben wir schon, wenn wir wechselseitig für einander in der Umwelt (der Andere in der meinen) da sind, und darin liegt, leiblich-körperlich da sind, immer." HuaVI: 307

[88] Husserl's aim, however, was to show why Lipps' position fell short in explaining the true character of emphatic encounter. Already in the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl had been critical of what he considered to be the psychologistic position of Lipps, and towards the turn of 1910s, almost every piece written on empathy took its point of departure from the criticism of Lipps. See e.g. HuaXIII: 21ff., 70ff.; HuaXIV: 236ff.

belonging to a community.[89] This line of investigation – sometimes called also the phenomenology of "socialities" (*Sozialitäten*)[90] – was based on Husserl's basic perception on the *two-sided* character of these relations: unlike other forms of intentionality, social relations embody within themselves a specific sense of reciprocity through which the social objectivities (e.g. families, communities) acquire their unique objectivity. Already in Husserl's early manuscripts, this approach was developed into a theory on the specific social "functions" entailing an intrinsic practical relevance: my relation towards the others is fundamentally characterized by different kinds of responsibilities and practical anticipations that are fundamentally different than in the case of nature or cultural objects.[91] Social relations, besides that they contain elements that are characteristic of all experience (e.g. seeing, listening), are characterized by uniquely interpersonal experiences such as friendship, love, persuasion – but also the use of power and violence.

What these approaches seemed to exclude, however, was the genuinely phenomenological question of the inner life of communities. Although many forms of human communality are embedded in worldly institutions – families, societies, states and so on – these are not intended merely by singular subjects but they also structure the co-operation of individual subjects. At the end of 1910s, Husserl began to consider human communities as "*personal unities of a higher order*", which, as he proclaimed, "*have their own lives*, preserve themselves by lasting through time *despite the joining or leaving of individuals*"[92]. Instead of mere correlates of individual consciousness, communities were to be understood as subjectivities that have their own personal existence, a personal history (genesis) as well as a teleological structure. This idea of social communities as guided by the idea of personal community – an idea that was especially entertained by Max Scheler in his theory of "collective person" (*Gesamtperson*)[93] – was

[89] HuaXIII: 98–104.

[90] As Husserl put it in C-manuscripts, for the constitution of "socialities", the community of empathy is like what "the spatial form is for reduced nature", i.e. the "social space" which allows the temporal simultaneity and succession of individual subjects. HuaMatVIII: 317.

[91] HuaXIII: 104.

[92] „die Personen sind vielmehr Glieder von Gemeinschaften, von personalen Einheiten höherer Ordnung, die als Ganze ihr Leben führen, sich bei Zutritt oder Abgang von einzelnen in der Zeit fortdauernd erhalten […]". HuaIV: 182.

[93] Scheler 1980: 512. Here, Scheler ascribes the collective person a unique form of intentional consciousness ("*Bewusstsein-von*"), which cannot be returned to individual subjects.

developed more thoroughly in Husserl's manuscripts on intersubjectivity.

For the phenomenological analysis, the idea of a collective *person* was by no means a mere thought-experience or a meaningless bypath. Already in *Ideas* II Husserl presented the division between theory of the person and theory of community as one of the fundamental questions on the basis of which "our entire world-view is fundamentally determined."[94] This emphasis was highlighted through the gradual substitution of "social ontology" with a phenomenological account of *social ethics*, which Husserl began to develop especially through the so-called *Kaizo* essays of early 1920s.[95] This idea – whose origin Husserl located in Plato[96] – referred primarily to the close alliance of the descriptive and normative aspects of social theory. As for Hobbes and Hegel, the basic question of interpersonal relations was intimidately tied to the teleological and normative development of human sociality, that is, to the question what constitutes a just and righteous form of human community. As Husserl argued, the idea of social ethics could not "be attained by subjecting the practical relations towards ones companions (*Nebenmenschen*) to individual-ethical investigation."[97] Instead of a mere derivative of individual ethics, social ethics was to be conceived as an autonomous sphere of investigation that has its own essential forms and regularities.

With regard to this topic, we should acknowledge the crucial role of one particular character, Edith Stein. It is well known that during the period of writing *Ideen II*, Stein worked as Husserl's assistant and contributed significantly to the final form of the work. Besides her dissertation on empathy in 1916, Stein wrote several treatises and essays on the phenomenology of intersubjectivity, including the two works published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch*: "Individual and Community", (written in 1919, pub

As we shall observe, Husserl's theory of social communities relied on this idea.

[94] HuaIV: 172.

[95] It is exactly in these essays that we encounter the topic of Europe in connection to the problematic of rational development of culture: especially in the essay *Formale Typen der Kultur in der Menschheitsentwicklung*, Husserl addresses the birth of Greek philosophy in terms of a transition from the religious-mythical to the scientific world-view, resulting in the "philosophical form of culture" characteristic of medieval and modern times.

[96] HuaVII: 14ff. Cf. HuaXXVII: 88.

[97] Letztere ist nicht etwa damit schon gegeben, daß das praktische Verhalten des Einzelmenschen zu seinen „Nebenmenschen", das ist zu seinen Genossen in der Einheit der Gemeinschaft, individualethischer Forschung unterzogen wird. Es gibt notwendig auch eine Ethik der Gemeinschaften als Gemeinschaften. HuaXXVII: 21.

lished in 1922) and "The Problem of State" (written in 1921, published in 1925). Especially in the first work, Stein developed a theory of interpersonal motivations, which, by conjoining particular streams of consciousness with one another, provided human communities with their distinctive "life-force" (*Lebenskraft*). Community, Stein argued, was not a mere sum of individual subjects and their motivations; rather, it was based on a special class of intentions that have the character of "intertwinement" (*Verschmelzung*) with other intentions. Accordingly, in "The Problem of State" Stein worked towards a phenomenological concept of state not in terms of an objective structure – the civil society or political institutions – but in terms of specific acts intending the idea of the state (e.g. voting in national elections).[98] The other student of Husserl's who took up this theme was Gerda Walther, whose dissertation *Ein Beitrag zur Ontologie der sozialen Gemeinschaften. Mit einem Anhang zur Phänomenologie der sozialen Gemeinschaften* appeared as a single volume in Husserl's phenomenological yearbook in 1922.[99]

As Dan Zahavi has put it in his detailed work on the problem intersubjectivity in Husserl's phenomenology, even though we might subscribe to the idea that Husserl was striving towards the constitutive significance of intersubjectivity, most of his concrete analyses dealt with the constitution of intersubjectivity beginning with the individual ego.[100] Despite the strong socio-critical ethos in Husserl's later philosophy, most of his manuscripts followed the idea of a "constant beginner" who was interested in the givenness of other subjects within personal experience. To do justice to Husserl's analyses, I will also take my point of departure from this question. However, since we are already familiar with a number of fine analyses on the primordial levels of Husserl's theory of intersubjectivity – and since we lack an overview on the higher-order phenomena of community, common will, and culture – I will direct my focus on these matters rather quickly. It is my conviction that the Husserlian current of phenomenology has not perhaps yet realized the full potential of these analyses; moreover, they have not been brought into dialogue with the main currents of con-

[98] Cf. Sawicki 2003.

[99] Walther's treatise was motivated by the insistence to discuss the specific normativity characteristic of social communities, which she portrayed as "self-sufficient, real, animal-spiritual unities of a higher order" (*selbständige, reale, seelisch-geistige Einheiten höherer Art*). See Walther 1922: 144ff.

[100] Zahavi 2001: 17.

temporary social and political philosophy. For the problematic of Europe, this line of approach is absolutely crucial.

Perhaps the easiest way of introducing the idea of interpersonal subjectivity is to start with the simple division between subjective and communal accomplishments.[101] Beginning with the simple static analysis of intentional experiences, most of the objectivities we constitute appear as our own personal accomplishments. I see a table – its "reality" is a result of my active constitution. "Luke, I am your father" – this statement, although it is shared by two (or more) persons, can be attributed to a single person; it is "my" expression. However, in our daily lives we encounter a whole set of objects, expressions, and accomplishments that cannot be attributed to any particular subject. A piece by a symphonic orchestra, a novel theory created by a scientific research group, or even a "collective" declaration of independence (cf. the Preamble: "We, the people…") – these are all examples of collective accomplishments that cannot really be attributed to any particular agent but they are created and shared together. They are based on a common resolution or they strive for a common goal.

Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising to discover that our contemporary philosophical theories of the social sphere (or "social ontology") haven often taken their point of departure from the phenomenon of "social interaction", that is, the active and reciprocal co-operation of individual agents. Such activity takes place in numerous occasions such as in the case of a music orchestra, a football team or a scientific research group, but also in the more complex forms of interaction such as the networks of cyberspace (internet, social media), political parties or states. In the contemporary debate, one of the main currents of this topic has been the idea of "collective intentionality" – a shared directedness inherent to social bodies – which John Searle, for one, considers the key psychological presupposition of all *social* reality. According to this account, collective intentionality is that feature of the social reality which affords the things of the world their intersubjective functionality, for instance, when money is used as a medium of commerce. In line with his realist ontology, in *The Construction of Social Reality* (1995) Searle distinguished the "social" and "institutional" facts that belong to collective intentionality from the "brute

[101] Also Husserl follows this procedure in many of his manuscripts, cf. HuaXIV: 192. Cf. Donohoe 2004: 105ff.

facts" of nature on the grounds of voluntary acceptance: whereas the facts of nature exist mind-independently, the social and institutional facts are based on human agreement.[102] This stance is also common to other leading theorists of social ontology, for instance, Raimo Tuomela. In his analysis of what he calls the "we-mode of collective intentionality", Tuomela considers two conditions that need to be fulfilled in order for the shared directedness to come about: "(i) the shared "for-groupness" based on collective acceptance and (ii) collective commitment to the shared content"[103]. If these conditions are not fulfilled, social facts cease to exist: they need to be confirmed and corroborated by others.

The frailty of these stances, however, has been the fact that they have been incapable of dealing with those forms of collective experience that do not really presuppose any kind of initiative on behalf of individual subjects. Alongside with the active forms of social co-operation, there is a wide variety of social phenomena that rely on what we might call involuntary adaptation, or, to put it in terms of John Dewey, on "social conditioning"[104] – phenomena that have their bearing through repetitive patterns of behavior. These conventions are acquired, for instance, through similar growth environment, education or the media, and as such, they are by no means "natural".[105] However, since human life is inextricably embedded in involuntary cultural and societal conditions, it would also seem incorrect to base them on any kind of active acceptance or collective agreement. Instead, they derive their leverage through passive habituation, through entanglement with all sorts of worldly practices and conventions.

A wonderful example of the actuation of passive collective beliefs is provided by the classic folk-tale "The Emperor's New Clothes" by Hans-Christian Andersen. In the story, an anonymous Emperor is approached by two weavers who promise to prepare the finest suit ever, however, by using a special fabric invisible to those who are either stupid or unworthy

[102] Searle 1995: 46. Searle has been rather explicit in distinguishing his own naturalistic philosophy of mind from traditional transcendental philosophy, especially that of phenomenology, arguing that even a theory of collective intentionality should survive the thought-experiment of brains-in-a-vat. "I am confident that collective intentionality is a genuine biological phenomenon, and though it is complex, it is not mysterious or inexplicable" (2006: 16).

[103] Tuomela 2008: 3.

[104] See Dewey 1984: 35.

[105] Thus Dewey contrasts his idea of social conditioning with the "myth" of the natural capabilities of the individual. See Dewey 1988: 299.

of the Emperor's position. As it is clear from the beginning, the project is a hoax: there is no real fabric and the weavers are only miming the process of fabrication. After the suit is done, the Emperor is first approached by ministers who all praise the new suit with one accord. He then proceeds to take a stroll among the city folks who likewise admire the new array. The scene is interrupted by a headstrong child who starts to make fun of the naked Emperor, gradually drawing in the adults to the mockery as well. Instead of withdrawing into shame, the Emperor descends into suspicion on the true state of the matters. Still, he boldly continues his stroll despite the ridicule.

As it is clear from the tale, on the level of individual experience the naked truth on the Emperor's clothes is there all along. What sustains the illusion of the clothed Emperor is the common "will to believe", the unarticulated aspiration to submit oneself to the socio-symbolic order. The Emperor believes in the clothing because any kind of doubt would deprive him of his position; the ministers follow him because they wish to appear as worthy of the highest principle in the social order. Lastly, the city folks follow him because they wish to avoid the label of stupidity. The illusory character of the establishment is of course revealed by the agent who has not yet been inscribed into the collective order, the headstrong child. Thus the reality of the clothing is a social construct: it is sustained by a shared, though unarticulated "agreement" on the state of things.

In the context modern philosophy, this idea of collective adaptation as the basic form of political and social co-operation has been articulated, above all, by the ideology-critical current of Marxist philosophy. According to the dominant idea of this tradition, it is an inherent feature of all ideologies to regulate our beliefs and practices in a manner which fundamentally distorts our shared perception of the real world. By offering a skewed view of the existing societal conditions – by concealing the history of suppression that founds the existing relations of power – the dominating ideologies aim at presenting the existing societal divisions and relations as natural, as if they had always existed.[106] By promoting a form of collective "false consciousness" (a notion that is absent from Marx's own writings) ideologies hinder the formation of a true class consciousness. Instead, they suppress the revolutionary potential of the oppressed. This *experiential di-*

[106] See e.g. Marx/Engels 1970: 47.

mension of ideologies is also known from the works of a few psychoanalytically oriented social theorists. Following Freud's later insights on the "collective unconscious" (*Kultur-Über-Ich*), theorists such as Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse have analyzed the suppressive character of modern (capitalist) ideologies and their relation to the unconscious dimension of human existence.[107] This line of interpretation has been continued by, for instance, Fredric Jameson's well-known theory of "the political unconscious" – a hermeneutic-narratological study of the production of ideological subjectivity.[108]

Speaking from a Husserlian perspective, however, even these conceptions can be said to suffer from certain inadequacies. First of all, because the Marxist critique of ideology has focused on analyses of the capitalist mode of production as well as its respective accomplishments – nationalism, culture production, and so on – it has fallen prey to the same confusion between the subject and object of culture that we encountered with regard to Hegel's theory of "objective spirit" in chapter 1.2. Jameson, for one, defines his project in terms of an "unmasking of cultural artifacts as socially symbolic acts"[109], and thus evades the division between the *acts* and *accomplishments* of a collective. In other words, what these analyses have lacked is the distinction between the dimensions of *cultura culturans* and *cultura culturata*, that is, the community as a set of interpersonal relations and its common accomplishments.[110] Secondly, in order to present themselves as efficacious, these reflections have usually promoted some form of historicism with regard to the socio-symbolic structures they wish to criticize. "The only effective liberation from the constraint [of the political unconscious]", argues Jameson, "begins with the recognition that there is nothing that is not social and historical – indeed, that 'in the last analysis', everything is political."[111] Thus it is not surprising to find Jameson describing his project under the title of *hermeneutics*: rather than relying on a transcendental theory of subjective or collective experience, this investigation starts from the "fact" of the irreconcilability of different socio-cultural frameworks and seeks to demonstrate their historically

[107] See Fromm 1961; Marcuse 1987.
[108] Jameson 1983.
[109] Jameson 1983: 5
[110] On this division see Hart 1992b: 643ff.
[111] Jameson 1983: 5.

constructed character. Within this approach, there is no need for an "ideology of ideo-logies", but all critique remains solely on the level of generalizations derived from historical evidence.

What seems to me as the critical potential of Husserl's phenomenology of intersubjectivity in this respect is that it is quite possible to come up with a theory of social ontology, which does not begin with the phenomenon of interaction but seeks to address its unconsciously constituted basis in different forms of passive genesis. These forms, I argue, extend from the very basic level of intersubjective experience to higher-order normative presuppositions, including all kinds of collective habitualities, styles and convictions. What I consider to be the key feature of this Husserlian approach is that the recognition of the seemingly constructed (or "top-down") character of collective beliefs and desires does not result in neglecting the transcendental approach. Rather, it is precisely on the basis of a "rigorous social philosophy"[112] – a *transcendental social ontology* – that one is able to do justice to the "constructed" and political character of socio-ideological commitments.

Despite Husserl's insistence on the specifically "childish" approach of phenomenology,[113] we should not equate the phenomenologist with the child in Anderssen's narrative. If we are to confirm Husserl's idea that the phenomenological reduction does not lose anything from the world, and that phenomenology merely investigates the natural attitude in its becoming, it should take seriously the validity of collective beliefs instead of simply denying them. In this regard phenomenology is actually a realist undertaking. "There can be no stronger realism than this –" Husserl writes in the *Crisis*, "I am certain of being a human being who lives in this world, etc., and I doubt it not in the least (if this is what is meant by realism.) The great problem is precisely to understand what is here so 'obvious'."[114] In the case of historical narratives that make up our generative history, for

[112] HuaXXVII: 57.

[113] As Husserl puts it in his lectures on phenomenological psychology: "The investigating I […] appears, from the perspective of natural attitude, as a child of the world […]" ("dem forschenden Ich, … und in der natürlichen Einstellung, sozusagen als „Welt-Kinder" erscheinenden)" HuaIX: 216.

[114] "Einen stärkeren Realismus kann es also nicht geben, wenn dieses Wort nicht mehr besagt als: „ich bin dessen gewiß, ein Mensch zu sein, der in dieser Welt lebt usw., und ich zweifle daran nicht im mindesten". Aber es ist eben das große Problem, diese „Selbstverständlichkeit" zu vestehen." HuaVI: 190–191.

instance, we are not dealing with the simple division between truth and untruth, or reality and illusions; since our experience is embedded in the generative nexus of community and tradition we are necessarily forced to live with all sorts of beliefs and narratives that are not simply given in full evidence. Instead, it is exactly by appropriating these narratives that we become a member of a particular community. Intersubjectivity, as it manifests itself in the abiding forms such as clubs, societies and states, refers essentially to the idea of passive habituation. How, then, are passivity and intersubjectivity conjoined with one another?

As I already hinted in connection to passive genesis, instead of active co-operation Husserl based his social ontology on an involuntary and non-reflexive relation to others – an approach we might designate with the term *interpassivity*.[115] Before any concrete encounter with other subjects, the others are embedded in my experience through the horizontal structure of experience, though not as concrete subjects but as someone who participate in the constitution of the common world. But the scope of interpassivity does not end here. As we engage with each other in different kinds of social relations – the phenomenon to which we referred earlier as the *active genesis* – not only do we create all sorts of common accomplishments, but we also build for ourselves a common history: things that are said and done remain within our experience as a kind of background for further orientations. This phenomenon of habituated sociality, which encompasses all kinds of social conventions, manners, and common beliefs, is also to be regarded as a form of shared passivity. Thus, what we have under the Husserlian notion of *interpassivity* is (i) the passively constituted basis of social interaction, which is both doxic-theoretical as well as practical; (ii) all kinds of collective beliefs or "social habitualities"[116] that originate from an active institution of meaning, but do not presup-

[115] In his intriguing work *Die Illusionen der anderen*, Robert Pfaller has coined the term "interpassivity" to describe the common tendency of human beings to realize their beliefs, acts and desires with regard to an unconscious relation to other subjects (2002: 25ff.). Echoing Heidegger's analyses on the anonymous others (*das Man*), as well as the Lacanian idea of symbolic father, Pfaller has paid attention to different modes of self-transposition that take place not only on the level of beliefs – like when I say that "People are envious", when I actually mean: "I am envious" – but also with regard to emotions, desires, and thrives. It is an inherent feature of especially the modern era that it works towards the transposition of our passive reactions. This happens in the case of canned laughter on TV, by which we engage in a TV show by letting the object do the laughing for us.

[116] HuaXV: 208.

pose any kind of active confirmation on behalf of the agents themselves.

For those who have been accustomed to discuss passivity primarily in terms of affectivity and receptivity, Husserl's notion of passivity may strike one as odd and unnecessarily broad. Moreover, it seems that Husserl himself understood passivity as denoting several things, beginning from pre-predicative (or pre-linguistic) perceptual experience to all sorts of involuntary affects which lie beyond our active attentiveness. With respect to the first category, Husserl spoke of the sphere of "pure passivity" (*reine / pure Passivität*) – which we could read as synonymous to transcendental aesthetics – that investigates the associative structures of conscious life that constitute the foundation for abiding forms of intentionality.[117] In the sphere of affectivity, we are also dealing with practical and axiological passivities – instincts, drives, feelings of pleasure and disgust – that serve as the motivational ground for practical and axiological reason, that is, for acts of willing and valuing. The introduction of time-consciousness certainly brings a new dimension to the notion of passivity, by which it becomes to denote the past sphere of retentions, that is, all sorts of past experiences in the light of which the present moment is given. This transition forms the point of departure for the most general formulation of passivity as the inattentive, unreflected modes of intentional awareness. "In general," writes Husserl, "passivity is the realm of associated nexuses (*Verbindungen*) and affiliations (*Verschmelzungen*), where all meaning that emerges is put together passively."[118] In this regard, it also encompasses the realm of acquired convictions, or, what Husserl sometimes calls by the name "secondary passivity" (*sekundare Passivität*).[119]

What we can say without hesitation, however, is that Husserl wanted to overcome the modern division between the domain of passivity as purely subjective receptivity and the sphere of activity as synthetic and communicative engaging:

> My passivity stands in connection with the passivity of all others. One and the same thing-world is constituted for us as well as the one and the same time as objective time so that my "now" and the "now" of others [...] are objectively simultane

[117] HuaXV: 75–82.
[118] "Passivität überhaupt ist das Reich assoziativer Verbindungen und Verschmelzungen, in denen aller entspringende Sinn passive Zusammenbildung ist". (HuaVI: 372)
[119] HuaXXVII: 110.

> ous. […] My life and the life of another do not merely exist, each for themselves; rather, one is "directed" toward the other.[120]

By arguing that "my passivity extends to the passivity of all others", Husserl was by no means suggesting any kind of telepathy or parapsychism. My experience, my stream of consciousness is given to me only, and I have no direct access to those of the others.[121] All meaning and validity is dependent on the subjectivity of consciousness understood as the "final absolute"[122]. What he was suggesting, however, was that already in my experience of the world as an independent, transcendent reality of its own there is an internal reference to other possible subjects not as objects of consciousness but as someone who constitute the world with me.

Actually, as I see it, if one is to locate the antecedents of Husserl's concept of passivity, one needs to go beyond the tradition of modern philosophy to Aristotle, particularly, to his theory of affects (*pathē*) as it presented especially in *Rhetorics*. Unlike modern philosophy, Aristotle did not conceive the domain of primal sensibility (*aisthēsis*) in terms of pure sense-data but as an intentional relation, which projects its objects either as pleasurable or painful.[123] Primal receptivity, according to this account, formed the basis for all other forms of affectivity, which, as especially in the case of human experience, become infected by different degrees of imagination (*fantasia*) and discursive reasoning *(logos*): for instance, fear is a feeling of anxiety accompanied by an imagination of a future pain. Thus, despite the essential self-centeredness of affectivity and sensibility, Aristotle could not view them as something immanent to the soul or "consciousness" – instead, he portrayed the *psychē* in terms of fundamental openness towards the world and to other subjects. As a result, his notion

[120] "Meine Passivität steht in Konnex mit der Passivität aller anderen: Es konstituiert sich eine und dieselbe Dingwelt für uns, ein und dieselbe Zeit als objektive Zeit derart, daß durch diese mein Jetzt und jedes anderen Jetzt und so seine Lebensgegenwart […] und meine Lebensgegenwart objektiv „gleichzeitig" sind. […] mein Leben und das eines anderen existieren nicht nur überhaupt beide, sondern eines ,,richtetw sich nach dem anderen." HuaXI: 343. See also HuaXXVIII: 68.

[121] HuaXIII: 111, n1.

[122] HuaXIX: 115. Cf. HuaI: 130.

[123] As Aristotle puts it in the second book of *Rhetorics*, all affects can be discerned according to three elements: the content of the affect (fear, anxiety, joy etc.), its cause (the motivation), and the object of affect (the intentional relation). See e.g. Rhet. 1382a22. On the intentionality of affects, see Nussbaum 1994: 81.

of *pathē* could not be defined as subjective receptivity but as an intersubjective sharing of the world which forms the basis for all social activities.[124]

In a manuscript written at the time of the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl put forward the claim according to which "everything worldly is intersubjectively constituted"[125]. Evidently, for those who have accustomed to proceed to intersubjectivity from the phenomenon empathy, this claim appears as problematic. If I do perceive others as being in the world with me – as someone whose body I perceive as analogical to mine – but at the same time, this very perception entails that I have constituted others in one way or another, the problem of intersubjectivity appears as a *circulus vitiosus*.[126] How can the others be both the *precondition* as well as the *target* of empathy? Now, according to Husserl, the vicious circle is evaded as soon as we pay attention to the fact that the others are indeed there already at the elementary level of perceiving a world, however, not as objects to be constituted or bodies to identify with but as the manifold of co-given perspectives. This idea is what Husserl sometimes calls "open intersubjectivity" (*offene Intersubjektivität*), which constitutes the primary form of Husserlian "interpassivity":

> In the normal experience of the world, which has the character of an objective (intersubjective) experience of the world from the start, myself and everything objectively experienced has the character of an apperceptive conception in relation to the open intersubjectivity. Even when I do not possess an explicit representation of the others, their presence is in constant co-validity and in an apperceptive function.[127]

[124] As Aristotle puts it in the beginning of *Rhetorics* II, in order for any discursive statement to convince its listeners, a certain degree of shared affectivity must be presupposed, for "when people are feeling friendly and placable, they think one sort of thing; when they are feeling angry or hostile, they think either something totally different or the same thing with a different intensity." Aristotle, Rhet. 1377b31–1378a1. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that Heidegger, in his 1924 lecture series on Aristotle's *Rhetorics*, calls this work the first hermeneutics of *being-with-others* (*Mitsein*), and further, in *Sein und Zeit*, went on to translate pathos not as affectivity but as "attunement" (*Befindlichkeit*), the basic mode of finding oneself in the world, on the basis of which all understanding (*Verstehen*) takes place. Heidegger GA 18: 109ff.

[125] HuaXV: 45.

[126] Indeed, the genetic problem of first empathy was something that Husserl tackled since the beginning of the 1920s onwards (see e.g. HuaXIV: 112–120).

[127] „In der normalen Welterfahrung, die von vornherein den Sinn einer objektiven (intersubjektiven) Welterfahrung hat, hat jedes als Objekt Erfahrene und so auch ich selbst eine apperzeptive Auffassung in bezug auf die offene Intersubjektivität. Auch wenn ich keine explizite Vorstellung von Anderen habe, ist doch das Dasein von Anderen in konti-

The others are there in my structure of perception not necessarily as actual others but as potential others who give validation to the otherwise latent horizons. "The intrinsically first other (the first non-ego)", Husserl writes, "*is the other ego*"[128] – and here we should be careful – not as an "object" of empathy, but as the anonymous other devoid of any spatio-temporal or personal existence.[129] Without this co-constitutive function, there could be no idea of objectivity, reality, or the world; simply because I would not be able to possess the idea of several perspectives. Without the idea of several perceivers, I could not imagine an object as perceived from two distinct perspectives at the same time, equally valid. Thus unlike Hegel, who could attribute the constitution of thinghood to a pre-social (i.e. perceptual) consciousness, Husserl's idea of object-constitution pointed towards "the necessity of transcendental co-existence"[130] – the others, so to speak, secure the validity of my object-consciousness, and they do so exactly by verifying the multiplicity of possible perspectives to the world. It is here that find Husserl philosophizing in an Aristotelian manner: joint passivity is the condition for the having of a world

Thus what we gain with the constitution of the objective world is nothing less than *the primal form of a community*, that is, the ascending, though unarticulated, sense of a "we" (*Wir*).[131] Against the prevalent usage of the first person plural, this primordial form of "we" or "we-community" (*Wir-Gemeinschaft*) does not yet delimit itself with regard to a "they". Instead of referring to those forms of collectivity that we encounter in mutual recognition or agency, this idea of a "primal we" refers solely to the co-presence of individual perspectives through which the objective world retrieves its shared validity. In other words, this primal form of community is devoid of any norm that would separate the different perspectives from each other: it is constituted in a formal, *universal* co-existence of anony-

nuierlicher Mitgeltung und in apperzeptiver Funktion." HuaIX: 394. On the idea of open intersubjectivity, see also HuaXIV: 289. Cf. Zahavi 2001: 39ff.

[128] HuaI: 137.

[129] In a manuscript pointed out by Ichiro Yamaguci, Husserl interestingly makes a reference to what he calls an "anonymous" empathy, "suspended from its function" (Yamaguchi 1982: 103). Cf. Zahavi 2001: 73.

[130] "Die intentionale Beschlossenheit ist Notwendigkeit der transzendentalen Koexistenz." HuaXV: 370.

[131] HuaI: 137; HuaXXIX: 80; HuaMatVIII: 126.

mous others. Respectively, its intentional correlate is what Husserl calls the *one identical world* ("*Die" Welt* or *Die eine Welt*) as the static foundation of all particular objectivity – a world which still lacks all socio-cultural meaning.[132]

Does this mean that after the introduction of transcendental "we", Husserl was inclined to split the sphere of transcendental experience into two separate dimensions? This is not the case. As Husserl put it in the *Kaizo* essays, the individual and the community should be understood as an "a priori undistinguishable pair of ideas"[133], which, from the viewpoint of objective world-constitution, necessarily presuppose each other. I can never completely renounce the personality or individuality of my experience, even if we are dealing with social forms of meaning-constitution. The point, rather, is to clarify the different ways in which this personal constitution acquires for itself novel dimensions through its associations with other subjects, in the life of the community.

Therefore, instead of conceiving the individual and the community in terms of two absolute spheres of constitution, Husserl articulated their difference in terms of *two modalities of the same phenomenological absolute*. Again, this distinction can be understood in terms of abstract and concrete constitution. As Husserl put it in a manuscript, the transcendental ego indeed the final absolute without which any sense of givenness could be thought of – however, *it does not enclose the absolute as such*. Or, to be more precise, the ego is not the sole modality of phenomenological absolute but rather a particular aspect of what Husserl called the "concrete absolute"[134] that is constituted within the manifold of subjects. By focusing on the constitutive activity of the individual ego we literally *abstract* from that concrete foundation that gives transcendence its sense and validity: the transcendental intersubjectivity. Interestingly, in a manuscript from the beginning of the 1930s, Husserl asked whether the ego attained by the transcendental reduction was actually an *equivocation*, albeit an "absolutely

[132] On Husserl's use of "die eine Welt", see HuaXIII: 399; HuaXIV: 202; HuaXV: 358.
[133] HuaXXVII: 6.
[134] See "Die Vielheit des Subjekte als das konrete Absolute" in HuaXIV: 272ff., esp. HuaXIV: 274: "Und konkret genommen ist absolut: diese Vielheit als eine Vielheit von Subjektpolen, Polen für ein jedem solchen Pol gesondert zugehöriges konkretes Leben, konkretes Meinen, Erfahren, einstimmig Erfahren, richtig oder unrichtig Denken, darunter auch wissenschaftlich rechtmässig Denken."

necessary one"[135]. While paying attention to the transcendental ego as the absolutely necessary dative of manifestation, it abstracts from the genuine subject *of objective reality itself*, the universal community of monads.

This controversial point was also confirmed by Husserl in his seemingly paradoxical formulation that "in their absolute being, the monads *are dependent*".[136] The apparent paradox of this statement is done away as soon as we grasp the constitutive role of intersubjectivity in its necessary function. In normal experience, the objectivity of my accomplishments is constantly confirmed by others not only in their validity – as it happens with regard to dreams and hallucinations – but in their very objectivity and reality *per se*. Dependence and not independence is what endows the monads their constitutive capability. The community of monads, the universal intersubjectivity – this is *the concrete absolute*.

Paying attention solely to the doxic modalities of perception offers us a rather one-sided perspective of the primordial levels of intersubjectivity. What this approach seems to suggest that our fundamental relationship with other subjects, despite its passive character, is primarily theoretical and has to do with securing the objective existence of the world. However, this is not what Husserl had in mind. Although the problematic of objective validity plays a central role in Husserl's work – this mainly due to his interest in scientific objectivity – our experiential relation to others cannot be reduced into the domain of theoretical reason. Instead, if we are to understand the manifold dynamics of communal life, especially the creation of common accomplishments, we should also take into account the motivational basis that founds the different forms of social co-operation. For Husserl, this sphere was the scene of practical passivity, the life of drives (*Triebe*), instincts (*Instinkte*):

> I can only hint briefly here to the idea that [social] affinity cannot be established solely on the basis of social acts. As the individual subjects of unfold their activity on the basis of dark, blind passivity, the same concerns social activity. But already the sphere of passivity, the *instinctive life of drives*, is able produce an intersubjective connection.[137]

[135] HuaXV: 586. This point is also discussed by Hart 1992a: 165ff.

[136] "Die Monaden in ihrem absoluten Sein bedingen sich." HuaXIV: 268

[137] "Nur kurz hinweisen kann ich hier noch darauf, dass solche Verbundenheit nicht nur durch soziale Akte hergestellt werden kann. Wie die Einzelsubjekte ihre Aktivität auf dem Grund einer dunklen, blinden Passivität entfalten, so gilt dasselbe auch von der sozialen

In Husserl's theory of instinctual life, we can basically differentiate between two modes of drive-intentionality (*Triebintentionalität*): (1) those drives and instincts that are primarily subjective in the sense of autonomy, i.e. drives that are targeted towards the self-preservation of the ego (sometimes called "the universal lifedrive"[138]), and (2) "intersubjective" drives, that is, drives that contain within themselves an internal reference to other egos, and that have the character of reciprocity (sometimes defined as *Wechseltriebe*). We should emphasize here Husserl's insistence on the intentional character of instinctual life: instead of conceiving drives and instincts as eternal forces unfolding in the unconscious dimension of the human psyche, Husserl argued that even these blind motivational pulls acquire themselves a habitually defined character. Being fused with different cultural and social norms, our instinctual intentions are constantly intertwined with other forms of intentionality; by conflating themselves with societal and cultural objectivities, accomplishments and desires, our instinctual life is able to constantly re-create itself. This is why Husserl refers to drive-intentionality, not merely as sporadic pulls, but as a "process" that constantly point towards new possible fulfillments.[139]

Especially through his analysis of intersubjective drives, Husserl was able to bring in a significant element to the fundamental interpassivity in the community of monads. What Husserl basically insisted was that in the primordial level of world-experience, the others are there not just as someone who constitute the world with me, but also as specific objects of my intentional life.

> Primordiality is a system of drives. As we understand it as the primitively ascending stream, [we discover] that in each individual

Aktivität. Aber schon die Passivität, das instiktive Triebleben kann intersubjektiven Zusammenhang herstellen." HuaXIV: 405. Cf. HuaIX: 514: "Wie die Einzelsubjekte ihre Aktivität auf dem Grund einer dunklen, blinden Passivität entfalten, so gilt dasselbe auch von der sozialen Aktivität". See Hart 1992a: 184ff.

[138] See Smith 2010: 269.

[139] "Die instinktive Intention und instinktive Lust der Erfüllung betrifft nicht einen Endzustand, sondern den ganzen Prozess, kontinuierlich die Momentanintention sich erfüllen (zu) lassen und wieder als Träger neuer Intentionen zu neuen Erfüllungen übergehen (zu) lassen; also (die) Einheit des Prozesses' der Intention-Erfüllung, das ist selbst das Telos, das ist, dass (sich) die instinktive Intention, die einheitlich von vornherein auf dieses Ineinander der Intentionalität und ihrer Entspannung geht, und sich als einheitliche nicht in einer Phase, sondern im ständigen Tun erfüllt, (erfüllt). Dieser urinstinktive Prozess steht weiter in Beziehung zu anderen." HuaMatVIII: 328.

> there is also a gravitating drive to the stream of another, and this with other I-subjects.[140]

Hence, the primordial community of co-existing monads does not consist of mere theoretical observers. Rather, the others are given to me also as someone whose perspective I wish to reach. Here we find Husserl in his most Hegelian mode of philosophizing: self, in its primitive form, is essentially *desire* which finds its satisfaction through the consciousness of the other. However, we should reject here the Kojévian interpretations of the primordial desire as the "destruction" or the "assimilation" of the other "I".[141] For Husserl, this original desire of the ego to transgress itself does not allow itself to be characterized in any material characteristics; it is merely a "dark and blind" impetus from the *ego* to the *alteri*. However, it is exactly this original drive towards the streams of others that founds what Husserl names as the intentional "intertwining" (*Verflechtung*) of primordialities.[142] This interlacement is able to produce lasting "associations" (*Verbindungen*), which, by manifesting itself in abiding habitualities, make possible the different forms of practical co-operation. As I will show later, it is exactly this intertwining and association of individual acts that serves as the ground for Husserl's idea of "suprapersonal consciousness" or the "personalities of a higher order".

However, in order to fully appreciate Husserl's idea of constitutive intersubjectivity, we need a more *concrete* understanding of social activity. More precisely, it must be asked how is this activity able to produce lasting accomplishment and pass them forward in the course of tradition. For this purpose we need to move forward from the problem of *passive genesis* to *active genesis*, that is, into that dimension where others are not solely anonymous others but concrete worldly subjects with whom I can engage in different ways: in communication, understanding, common striving, love, hate, sexuality, and so on.

[140] "Die Primordialität ist ein Triebsystem. Wenn wir sie verstehen als urtümlich stehendes Strömen, so liegt darin auch jeder in andere Ströme, und mit evtl. anderen Ichsubjekten, hineinstrebende Trieb. (HuaXV: 594).
[141] Kojéve 1980: 4.
[142] HuaXV: 543, 587, 599.

2.3. Empathy and Lifeworld

In the existing Husserl scholarship it is somewhat common to introduce the higher forms of social interaction through the problem of empathy (*Einfühlung*).[143] Accordingly, Husserl himself stressed the central role of empathy with regard to the higher-level problems of human sociality, including the problematic of cultural interaction.[144]

The concept of empathy, however, was not to be understood in the everyday use of the word, as a compassionate identification with another person, his or her emotional stance.[145] As Husserl put it, the problem of empathy was to be understood primarily as a problem of a "fictive genesis"[146] that concerns the first (though hypothetical) identification with the other subject not only as someone who stands as an object of perception but who shares a common world with me. It is through this identification, or the essential discrepancy implied in it, that this common world acquires an objective character, a normative specificity.

Let us shortly recapitulate Husserl's basic argument. In the well-known description of the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl defined empathy as a form of *appresentation* through which I experience the other subject not as a mere thing in the world but as an ensouled being who participates in the constitution of the world. This experience was to be understood in terms of a specific "pairing" (*Paarung*), which, as we may learn from his earlier analysis, was to be conceived as an associative experience of two similar or analogical contents of meaning. Through pairing I associate my experiential abilities with those of the other person: I see the other "as if I were there".[147] As Husserl emphasized, this did not entail a direct access to the inner life of the other but a relation to his or her *situation*. Because empathy has its necessary foundation in the experience of the first-person, Husserl claimed, the other is fundamentally given to me as an *alter ego*,

[143] See, e.g. Theunissen 1984: 70ff.
[144] HuaI: 161; HuaXIV: 165–166; HuaVI: 320. See also HuaI: 35; HuaXV: 26.
[145] HuaXXXVII: 194.
[146] HuaXIV: 477.
[147] HuaXV: 427. Here, Husserl distinguished his own account especially from that of Lipps', who had designed empathy exactly as an immediate "projection" to the inner life of the other.

another "I".[148] As Husserl noted in a manuscript, appresentation was not to be understood in terms of an active presentation (*Darstellung*) or reproduction (*Abbildung*) of meaning[149]; I do not *give life* to the other while experiencing her in empathy, rather, I live it through without active fabrication.

This emphasis on the essential "mineness" of empathy has spurred a wide variety of critiques, which have argued for the unquestioned egocentrism of Husserl's philosophy of intersubjectivity. Levinas, in *Totality and Infinity*, criticized Husserl for conceiving the other through an analogizing gaze of the ego, which suffocates the peculiar transcendence of the other by transforming the other to a mere duplicate or rejoinder of myself.[150] For Levinas, this was a deeply violent gesture, one, that was in line with the basic tendency of Western philosophy to reduce "the other to the same."[151] Besides failing to appreciate the essential multiformity of human sociality, it also seemed to return the whole question of other subjects into a mere derivation of the individual consciousness – according to this critique, Husserl could not account for any idea of "radical otherness", which fundamentally transgresses and challenges the absolute character of the self.

Things are, however, not as straightforward. First, what Husserl had in mind was not primarily an ontological position arguing for the absolute similarity of the ego and the other. Rather, the problematic of empathy concerned primarily the *order of constitution* through which the other is experienced as a living being in the first place. By taking his point of departure from the idea of association which proceeds from the subject to the other, Husserl claimed that he was actually *avoiding* the idea according to which the other ego would appear as my "duplicate"[152]. Husserl was well aware that the appresentative experience of the other can never amount to an original presentation, that is, to a full living-with the conscious life of the other.[153] What we attain through empathy is merely a "mediate" ex-

[148] HuaI: 145.
[149] HuaXIV: 162.
[150] Levinas 1977: 47. Behind this conviction, of course, is the more general ontological view on Husserl's constitution: "It is Husserl who transforms relations onto correlatives of a gaze that fixes them and takes them as contents." Levinas 1977: 95.
[151] Levinas 1977: 28, 42–43.
[152] HuaI: 146.
[153] HuaIV: 198–200. Cf. HuaI: 146; HuaXV: 434.

perience of the other, or, a kind of "quasi-perception" which qualifies only as a *secondary experience*. I am necessarily the "constitutive primal norm for all other human beings"[154] in the sense that I have no direct access to the experience of the other, and as empathy occurs, we are still left with the original "abyss" (*Abgrund*) between individual streams of consciousness.[155]

In a parenthesis to the Fifth Meditation, Husserl presented the radical claim that not only does the other gain his or her subjectivity through empathy but this goes also for the mineness of the self as such. Although the other is experienced phenomenologically as a "modification of myself, I receive this character of being 'my' self by virtue of the contrastive pairing that necessarily takes place."[156] Thus the ego, Husserl wrote, "cannot be thought without the non-ego to which it is internationally related."[157] Here, perhaps the most obvious reading is of course the Fichtean-Hegelian one: the ego, by distinguishing itself from the other ego, gains itself the idea of complete self-consciousness, i.e., it realizes itself as a personal subject among other subjects. Self-consciousness, accordingly, does not emerge merely as an apperceptive unity of experience but it entails a necessary relation to others, which makes the self-consciousness something that Kant never saw it to be: an intrinsically *social phenomenon*.[158]

Despite this similarity, it would be misleading to identify Husserl's idea of empathy with the Hegelian recognition. Whereas for Hegel the process of recognition entailed a transition from the "perceptual" (*wahrnehmende*) or "understanding" (*verstehende*) modes of experience – modes that Husserl would have considered as belonging to the domain of theoretical reason – to that of practical reason, Husserl's notion of empathy did not entail such a transition. Empathy did not "explain" merely the emergence of conflict of individual wills (for instance, the dialectic of Master and

[154] HuaI: 154.
[155] HuaI: 150. This is also pointed out in a manuscript from 1919, where Husserl discusses the problem of empathy beginning from the inevitable discrepancy (*Widerstreit*) between self and other.
[156] "Notwendig tritt es vermöge seiner Sinneskonstitution als intentionale Modifikation meines erst objektivierten Ich, meiner primordinalen Welt auf: der Andere phänomenologisch als Modifikation mezhes Selbst (das diesen Charakter mein seinerseits durch die nun notwendig eintretende und kontrastierende Paarung erhält)." HuaI: 144.
[157] HuaXIV: 244. Cf. HuaIV: 96.
[158] What this process of empathy implied was a transition from the anonymous functioning of self-awareness to its thematic or "indexical" sense ("I" as distinguished from "you", "he/she" etc.) from "latent" to "patent" self-consciousness. See. Zahavi 2001: 56.

Slave) or the accomplishments of objective spirit (cultural objectivity) but it came to define the very existence of a common world. Since the relation between the self and other is characterized by an inevitable discrepancy (*Widerstreit*), even empathy must take its point of departure from the experience of common nature.[159] It is exactly this commonness that serves as the necessary platform for the experiences of concordance and discordance, which, through the mediation of individual situations, give the surrounding world its normatively specific character:

> We are in a relation to a common surrounding world – we are in a personal association: these belong together. We could not be persons for others if a common surrounding world did not stand there for us in a community, in an intentional linkage of our lives. Correlatively spoken, the one is constituted essentially with the other.[160]

Empathy, as it actively confirms the existence of several subjects in reciprocal understanding, is able to foster a "unity of similarity"[161], that is, it is able to give the latent sense of "we" a concrete form. This reciprocity, Husserl argued, takes place first through the "understanding of the other's organism and specifically organismal conduct".[162] It acquires for itself a culturally specific form only by proceeding to the "definite contents belonging to the higher psychic sphere"[163], especially to the domain of communication (*Mitteilung*). The emergence of communication does not entail that people would understand each other better; instead, it is through communication that the objective reality is able to acquire for itself a specific permanence in the form of lasting ideal and symbolic meanings.[164]

It was especially this idea of an intersubjective world that Husserl analyzed in detail with the help of the notion of the "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*). Although we find this notion already in the 1917 manuscripts published in the second volume of *Ideas*, it was not until the 1930s that the idea

[159] HuaI: 149; HuaXIV: 141.
[160] „Wir sind in Beziehung auf eine gemeinsame Umwelt - wir sind in einem personalen Verband: das gehört zusammen. Wir könnten für Andere nicht Personen sein, wenn uns nicht in einer Gemeinsamkeit, einer intenlionalen Verbundenheit unseres Lebens eine gemeinsame Umwelt gegenüber stünde; korrelativ gesprochen: eins konstituiert sich wesensmäßig mit dem anderen." HuaXIV: 191.
[161] HuaI: 142
[162] HuaI: 148.
[163] HuaI: 149.
[164] HuaXIV: 202.

of lifeworld gained its full prominence as the central point of departure for phenomenology in general. Especially in *Crisis*, the problematic of the lifeworld was introduced as a novel "path" to transcendental phenomenology, which, by "questioning back" (*rückfragen*) to the objective accomplishments of transcendental subjectivity, was able to fully appreciate the essentially *intersubjective* as well as *dynamic* character of meaning-constitution. In this regard, the ontology of the lifeworld corresponded with the growing interest towards the genetic and generative dimensions of phenomenology: instead of simply turning its gaze away from the "presuppositions" (*Voraussetzungen*) of our everyday attitude, phenomenology was now defined in an essential relation to these. (As I will argue in part 4, this appreciation of the teleological aspect of philosophical undertaking had important consequences for Husserl's view on the development of philosophy.)

It is perhaps instructive to note briefly that within Husserl's overall philosophy, the notion of lifeworld served several purposes and it acquired several functions. Despite the long period of development, these tensions are evident even within the *Crisis*, where Husserl speaks of the lifeworld, for instance, both as the "realm of original self-evidences" (*Reich ursprünglicher Evidenzen*) as well as the world of cultural and spiritual accomplishments, including the objective accomplishments of modern natural sciences.[165] Lifeworld denotes the a priori, universal ground of all meaning, but Husserl speaks of it also as an essentially historical notion, as a world of human values, practices, norms and interests. Although Husserl most often employs this notion in singular form – as the correlate of transcendental intersubjectivity that encloses within itself all possible forms of objectivity, those of nature as well as culture – we sometimes find this notion also in plural, for instance, in the sense of cultural lifeworlds, e.g. "Indian" or that of "Chinese peasants".[166] It is actually possible to speak of different levels of lifeworld, beginning from the practical sphere of a certain profession or a social role ("the world of a musician") to very broad concepts of lifeworld, as in the case of cultural identities.

For Husserl, however, this discrepancy was not a sheer misunderstanding of the natural attitude. Instead, it was originally introduced by

[165] HuaVI: 130ff. Cf. HuaVI: 294–313.
[166] HuaVI: 141. Cf. HuaI: 160; HuaVI: 150; HuaXXIX: 313.

the philosophical enterprise as such, which brought within itself "a *necessary* and at the same time *dangerous* double meaning of world" as the universal, a priori foundation of sense (*Sinnesfundament*) and its individual realizations, i.e. "particular worlds" (*Sonderwelte*).[167] Husserl, however, did not interpret this division in terms of a split in two distinct domains, for instance, those of universal nature and particular culture, or sensibility and reason. Although Husserl treated the problem of world-constitution as proceeding from the lower levels of intentionality – peculiar to the constitution of material nature – to the more complex forms of animal nature and spiritual accomplishments, this did not entail a transition from the "absolute" to a "relative" sense of the world. On the contrary, *lifeworld is from the start a subjective-relative domain of sense* – its validity, however, is constantly negotiated and confirmed in connection with other people. As Husserl maintained, the intersubjective world is permanently "on the march", that is, it is constantly defined and demarcated through the generative history of meaning-sedimentation.[168]

In order to avoid the scattering of lifeworld into two distinct objects of experience, Husserl invoked the notion of *horizon* (*Horizont*) to accentuate its essentially "pre-given" (*vorgegeben*) nature.[169] This notion can be understood in two regards. In its "horizontal character" (*Horizonthaftigkeit*), the lifeworld does not denote a specific intentional correlate of consciousness; rather, it functions as the *necessary background of sense* through which individual things acquire their meaningful character. As such, the lifeworld is "constantly pre-given, and constantly valid in advance"[170] – the lifeworld is what structures our experiential field by offering a comprehensive *pre*-view of the surrounding world. It is for the sake of lifeworld that individual things, objects, events and practices have their "default value", i.e., they are always projected with regard to a certain idea of expec-

[167] "Erwächst hier nicht eine notwendige und zugleich gefährliche Doppeldeutigkeit von der Welt […]." HuaVI: 460. As I will show later, it was already Heraclitus who articulated the task of philosophical undertaking as the discovery of the "one world" as the correlate of universal reason, i.e. the shared background of individual worlds defined by myths, social norms and conventions.

[168] "Die Konstitution der Intersubjektivität und intersubjektiven Welt ist beständig auf dem Marsch" (HuaXV: 45).

[169] Lifeworld as a pre-given horizon, see HuaVI: 141–146; HuaXXXIX: 99–105. See also Husserl, E&U: 24ff. Cf. Yamaguchi 1982: 19; Steinbock 1995: 104ff.

[170] HuaVI: 461.

tancy and normality, of *familiarity* (*Bekanntheit*) and *routine* (*Gewohnheit*).[171] As this normality is specified through intersubjective confirmation in its social, historical and cultural specificities, a particular lifeworld becomes understandable as the "delimitation" (Gr. *horizein*) of the world as universal ground of experience – what Husserl sometimes called the "universal horizon" of all experience, or what Merleau-Ponty calls the "horizon of all horizons."[172] Through the stratification of ideal meanings, a sense of familiarity and normality, the lifeworld acquires for itself a culturally or historically unique sense; nevertheless, *it still retains its horizontal character*.

Accordingly, the concept of lifeworld points towards two crucial features in the constitution of human communities. (i) With the help of this concept, Husserl wanted to refute the idea according to which the generative unity of communities would reside merely in the acceptance or construction of a common narrative. Although stories and myths may have a special role in strengthening the sense of unity within different social bodies, these narratives have their foundation in the idea of *common world* that functions as the indispensable horizon of communal activity. (ii) Instead of a mere doctrine of objective spirit, Husserl's notion of lifeworld entailed a necessary relation to the material, *concrete conditions* of the geo-social environment. Thus communality, before it expresses itself in different accomplishments of the spirit – concepts, ideas, shared norms and so on – finds itself in a relation to a particular territoriality (although it is possible to render this territoriality as virtual). This point becomes evident as we focus on the problematic of home and alien.

In order to understand how individual lifeworlds acquire their normatively distinct character, Husserl began to develop a theory of their normative delimitation under the vocabulary of "homeworld" (*Heimwelt*) and "alienworld" (*Fremdwelt*).[173] In its most general sense, the idea of homeworld designates a sphere of familiarity which involves a consciousness of its normative specificity or "domesticity". Although this sense of familiarity characterizes even the very basic experiences of the surrounding world (e.g., even animals have a sense of "nearworld", *Nahwelt*), it acquires for itself a lasting character only within a framework of spiritual meanings.

[171] HuaXIV: 623–624. See also HuaXIV: 228; HuaXV: 214.
[172] HuaVI: 147; Merleau-Ponty 1962: 381.
[173] On this division in Husserl, see e.g. HuaVI: 302; HuaXIV: 64, 214–218, 613–630; HuaXXIX: 145ff.; Steinbock 1995, Waldenfels 1997, 1998.

Thus the idea of homeworld, in its pregnant sense, denotes the idea of a shared cultural territory (*Kulturterritorium*) which involves a consciousness of its uniqueness with regard to its outside. As Husserl insisted, "home and alien designate a difference in understanding"[174] – the familiarity of a particular lifeworld is based on its intelligible character, which is always delimited in regard to that which is unintelligible, that which is *unfamiliar and strange*. Therefore, rather than signifying a merely contingent feature in the constitution of human lifeworlds, the division between home and alien was actually a "permanent structure of every world".[175] Human lifeworlds, as they emerge through social co-operation, are never experiences as purely self-enclosed or self-identical totalities – something that could be explained purely in its own terms – but always in an antithetical relation to what they are not.

Because the horizontal structure of one's homeworld is not based on geographical conditions but on the level of familiarity and normality, its limits are often ambiguous and gradual. As Husserl argued, instead of a single homeworld we are actually part of several overlapping homeworlds or levels of homeworld, beginning with our closest community (e.g. family, hometown) to our fellow countrymen and finally, to very broad definitions of cultural worlds or civilizations.[176] The limits of one's homeworld are seldom fixed but fluctuating: for instance, for two cultures living in close interaction through intellectual or commercial exchange may often undergo a process of absorption, whereby they are merged into a completely novel homeworld. (On this idea with regard to the interaction of Greek city-states, see Ch. 3.2). In some cases, the concrete limits of a particular homeworld can be completely transient. For instance, in the case of a "nomadic people" (*Nomadenvolk*) the liminal horizon of their particular homeworld is essentially unstable, constantly exposed to the variation of its frontiers.[177] On the other hand, for a community living on an island, Husserl points out, the borders of homeworld have a specific permanence.[178]

[174] HuaXXIX: 42.
[175] HuaXV: 431.
[176] HuaXV: 604. Cf. HuaXV: 428–431.
[177] HuaXV: 206
[178] HuaXV: 232.

In order to emphasize the inherent connection between generativity and homeworld, Husserl distinguished between two forms of alienness: the inauthentic (*uneigentlich*) and the mythical (*mythische*).[179] Although we may speak of unfamiliar animals or plants as strange, unfamiliar or "alien", this does not yet amount to the genuine sense of the *Fremde*, which is essentially dependent on the unintelligible tradition of the alien people. In this regard, Husserl emphasized, the authentically alien is the "mythical" alien – not necessarily in the sense of a people living according to developed mythology but in the sense of a generative distance separating their tradition from our own.

Nevertheless, this idea of familiarity did not entail that the limits of a particular homeworld would completely lack a relation to geographical conditions. Instead of being "purely cultural" or "merely natural" formations, homeworlds are best described in terms of "geo-historical horizons"[180], which constantly project the division of familiarity and strangeness in regard to the environing world and its geographical features. Cultural traditions seldom exist without any relation to the earthly, material conditions but they are constantly localized through different borders, sites, monuments, and scenes.[181] Following Ed Casey, we might argue that it is exactly through traditions that "spaces" are turned into "places" that embody a certain generative background.[182] This is an important point to make, since it helps us to see the fundamental difference in Husserl's treatment of lifeworld to the other prevalent use of the word, namely, that of Jürgen Habermas who employs it mainly in connection to his theory of communicative action, as a specific region of human activity.[183] Moreover, it anticipates the crucial insight in regard to Husserl's delineation of Europe as a "spiritual form" (*geistige Gestalt*), which, despite

[179] HuaXV: 432
[180] HuaXV: 411.
[181] In the age of digital communication, it might seem that the geographical conditions would play a lesser role in the constitution of unique homeworlds. With the help of internet, we have been provided with possibilities to create lasting associations regardless of geographical distances. Still, it seems that even these electronic homeworlds necessitate the existence of a kind of "virtual geography", which manifests itself in the metaphors of web*sites*, chat-*rooms*, or virtual *worlds*. Even these mediums seem to presuppose some kind of delimited locality, which serves as the platform for different types of social cooperation.
[182] Casey 2007.
[183] See e.g. Habermas 1981: 196.

its fundamental spirituality, does not leave behind geographical factors (as Derrida wants to maintain).

In his work *Home and Beyond – Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (1995) Anthony Steinbock provides the richest available discussion on the problematic of the homeworld in Husserl's work. According to one of the key theses of the work, although some of Husserl's formulations point towards an understanding of the home–alien distinction as analogical to the emergence of selfhood through empathy, this should not prevent us from considering the essential difference that prevails between the two. Instead of a foundational relation between self and other, in which I act as the constitutive norm for the other, Steinbock argues, the structural difference between home and alien is constituted from the start as *co-generative* and *non-foundational*, i.e., as essentially interdependent and equal structures of experience. Home and alien are, as Steinbock puts it, essentially "liminal" notions not merely in the sense that they involve a process of limit-formation but on the virtue that "they are *mutually delimited* as home and as alien, as normal and as abnormal."[184] Home, Steinbock maintains, should not be understood in terms of "one-sided original sphere", but as "being co-constituted *as* home by encountering an alienworld."[185]

There are indeed passages in which Husserl seems to confirm this idea. "An alien humanity or humankind is constituted as an alien people," writes Husserl, "and at the same time, there is constituted for me and for us 'our own' community of homecomrades, community of a people in relation to our cultural environment as the world of our human validities that are unique."[186] However, it is possible to ask whether this reciprocity expresses anything new in regard to the constitution of the self-consciousness through empathy: as I already pointed out, Husserl argued that it is also the ego that gains its sense of selfhood through the emphatic encounter with others. In its pre-emphatic form, we can speak of the ego merely in terms of empty pole of acts, for it derives its genuine sense of self-awareness only through the emphatic encounter with others.

[184] Steinbock 1995: 179.
[185] Steinbock 1995: 182.
[186] „Es konstituiert sich also fremdes Menschentum, eine fremde Menschheit, als fremdes Volk etwa. Eben damit konstituiert sich für mich und für uns „unsere eigene" Heimgenossenschaft, Volksgenossenschaft in Beziehung auf unsere Kulturumwelt als Welt unserer menschlichen Geltungen, unserer besonderen." HuaXV: 214. Cf. Steinbock 1995: 182.

There is also another reason why the characterization of the home–alien division as a non-foundational relation appears as problematic.[187] Unlike empathic encounter, which takes its point of departure from two individual consciousness that are ultimately distinct, the categories of home and alien point towards a common foundation in the idea of *one identical world*. Unlike the conscious life of the individual, which is defined from the start by a specific *privacy* – my experiences cannot be lived by anyone else – particular homeworlds with their unique generative traditions arise always on the basis of a common world of nature (what Husserl sometimes calls the "nature-totality", *Allnatur*). As Husserl maintains, homeworlds acquire for themselves their unique character through a process of normative specification, through which they "set themselves apart" (*abhebt sich*) from the "anonymity" of the real world (*reale Welt*), a world whose objectivity serves as the necessary point of departure for the constitution of individual traditions.[188] As we shall observe in part 3, Husserl considered this idea of a common foundation as absolutely crucial for the formation of the philosophical attitude, and consequently, to the idea of Europe. This is not to say that all symbols, spiritual meanings, and descriptions would entail a necessary relation to this shared world: as we saw in the case of Emperor's clothes, it is well possible for cultural (i.e. symbolic) objectivity to break off from its objective foundations.

These reservations, however, do not refute Steinbock's ethical conclusion according to which the relation between home and alien should be understood in terms of "axiological asymmetry", mutual irreversibility or irreducibility.[189] We acquire our own personality only through encounters with others and their unique histories: in other words, our sense of being home necessitates the existence of an alien generativity. Because of the irreversibility of home and alien, argues Steinbock, the destruction of this difference through "transgression" or "occupation" would entail a destruction of generativity as such: in a world without tradition and familiarity, which imply an antithetical relation to the alien, we would be simply homeless. Against the idea of one-sided transgression of limits, Steinbock sketches what he calls a "responding to the alien from the perspective of

[187] The problematic character of the "non-foundational" account is also emphasized by Steinbock in his later article (1998c: 167).
[188] HuaXV: 215.
[189] Steinbock 1995: 184.

home"[190] – we can of course be responsive to the concerns, demands and hardships of the alien, but we ought not to interpret these merely on the basis of our own situation, nor should we anticipate the other to be reciprocally responsive towards our concerns. Steinbock's conclusion, then, resembles Levinas' idea on the non-symmetrical relation between the ego and the other: I am infinitely responsible for the alien, though not as a particular representative of a universal moral principle (or what Levinas calls *le même*, the "same") but as the infinitely different and "distant" other.[191] As Levinas puts it in his essay "No Identity", "man has to be conceived on the basis of the self putting itself, despite itself, in place of everyone, substituted for everyone by its very non-interchangeability –"

> He has to be conceived on the basis of the condition or uncondition of being hostage, hostage for all others who, precisely qua others, do not belong to the same genus as I, since I am responsible even for their responsibility. It is by virtue of this supplementary responsibility that subjectivity is not the ego, but me.[192]

Thus, against the idea of universal moral subject ("the ego") Levinas argues for the essential singularity of ethical agency, which constantly finds itself tangled in a unique web of responsibility and dependency. It is exactly this singularity – the fact that my actions are irreplaceable, that I am demanded to act as the unconditional "I" – which constitutes the genuine point of departure for any ethical stance.

As I would like to argue, however, it was exactly this broadened and context-bound idea of responsibility that characterized Husserl's late reflections on generativity and historicity. First, against the Kantian idea of ethical justification on the basis of a formal subject of universal moral principles, Husserl argued for the essentially context-bound and intersubjective character of ethical agency: the righteousness of our activity entails a necessary relation not only to those capacities that we have acquired for ourselves but also to the concrete (emotional, affective) relations that we develop towards other subjects. I will return to this idea in part 4. Moreover, the essential discrepancies that characterize the generative distances between home and alien did not prevent the possibility of a teleological-

[190] Steinbock 1995: 185, 256.
[191] On Steinbock's reference to Levinas, see 1995: 253.
[192] Levinas 1987: 150.

historical reflection, which seeks to uncover the common origin of generative traditions – of language, cultural objectivity and so on – in the universal structures of the shared lifeworld. To put it differently, I believe that through his reflections on generativity, Husserl's idea of universality called for a rearticulation on the basis of this generative multiformity. Instead of a position that can be attained once and for all, universalism was to be understood, fundamentally and necessarily, as a relation or a "task" that necessarily articulates itself in relation to the multiplicity of individual traditions. As Husserl himself put it, all historical communities are related "to the surrounding world which is communal for them (the personal "world"), and this surrounding world has relative actuality for them – and a changing actuality for different personal communities and their personal times –"

> but this [fact] does not exclude the possibility that personal communities, each of which has its personal surrounding world, can, by entering into or already being in relation with one another, have or attain an overlapping, common surrounding world or that they know themselves in their interrelations to be related to the same "real" world, only finding that each community views the world in quite a different way, accords it a completely different kind of actuality.[193]

As I will argue in part 3, it was indeed the name "Europe" that constituted the prime (though not the "good") example of this idea of "generative overlapping". Through the emergence of the theoretical attitude and the common praxis of philosophy, there emerged a novel idea of "political historicity", which executed itself through a specific insistence to overcome the generative distances that characterize the home–alien division. Instead of a one-sided relation of occupation or transgression, this idea of universal generativity was founded on a specific *relativization* of home and alien – it was to be conceived as a reciprocal *mediation* and *co-operation* of

[193] „In der Gemeinschaft ihres Lebens ist sie [die historische Gemeinschaft] bzw. ist das Leben ihrer Personen bezogen auf die für sie gemeinschaftliche Umwelt (die personale „Welt"), und diese Umwelt hat eine relative Wirklichkeit für sie - und eine wechselnde für verschiedene personale Gemeinschaften und ihre Personalen Zeiten; das schließt aber nicht aus, daß personale Gemeinschaften. deren jede ihre personale Umwelt hat, zueinander in Beziehung tretend oder schon in Beziehung stehend, auch eine übergreifende gemeinsame Umwelt haben oder gewinnen können, bzw. daß sie sich im Verkehr auf dieselbe „reale" Welt bezogen wissen, nur findend. daß eine jede die Welt ganz anders auffaßt, ihr eine ganz andere Wirklichkeit gibt." HuaVI: 299.

individual homeworlds that also found itself a world of its own, a world of ideal, scientific objectivity. Before we move on to examine this idea, let us still take a closer look at the theoretical foundations of this framework in Husserl's account of community and culture.

2.4. Personalities of a Higher Order: Phenomenology of Community and Culture

One of the most puzzling features in Husserl's theory of human sociality is his idea of communities as *subjective* or *personal* totalities. This idea, as it was developed by Husserl since the end of 1910s onwards, was formulated with the help of several different concepts, for instance, those of "we-subjectivity" (*Wir-Subjektivität*), "suprapersonal consciousnesses" (*überpersonale Bewusstsein*), and "personalities of a higher order" (*Personalität der höherer Ordnung*). Although we might be tempted to read these notions primarily as metaphors or analogies, Husserl was quite insistent in refuting this interpretation. As he put it very clearly, the analogy of the individual and the community was not to be understood as merely heuristic but "real" (*wirklich*).[194] Communities were to be understood also as personal totalities that can be characterized through such attributes as "personal act", "style", "memory" a "collective will".[195] They constitute for themselves a life that cannot be simply reduced back to individual consciousnesses – they "*have their own lives*, preserve themselves by lasting through time *despite the joining or leaving of individuals*."[196]

These personalities, Husserl claimed, range from small clubs to families, societies, political parties, and even states. This does not mean that the aforementioned communities would all understand themselves in a similar manner. As "personal unities", family and state (or the Hegelian civil society) have significant differences – however, what interested Husserl was their fundamental points of convergence: the idea of personality of a higher order does not say anything substantial about the different

[194] HuaXXVII: 21.
[195] See e.g. HuaVI: 326; Hua XIV: 205; HuaXXVII: 53.
[196] HuaIV: 182.

modes of social or political co-existence but it merely points towards the formation of a sense of commonness.

These notions, however, have not been easily accepted. Alfred Schütz, for one, acknowledged the significance of Husserl's analyses of intersubjectivity for his own phenomenology of the social world; however, he conceived the idea of "personality of a higher order" as being completely unfounded. Phenomenology was to remain a philosophy of the first person perspective, and even regards to the problematic of intersubjectivity, its strength relied essentially on its capability to understand personal co-operation from the point of view of the individual. Thus, as Schütz put it: "The attempts of Simmel, Max Weber, [and] Scheler to reduce social collectivities to the social interaction of individuals is, so it seems, much closer to the spirit of phenomenology than the pertinent statements of its founder."[197] Paul Ricoeur shares this idea, although he relates it to Husserl: "The decisive advantage of Husserl over Hegel appears to me to lie in his uncompromising refusal to hypostatize collective entities and in his tenacious will to reduce them in every instance to a network of interactions."[198] Following David Carr (who is more sympathetic towards this idea), it may thus seem that the idea of suprapersonal consciousness appears at first glance as "something *prima facie* unphenomenological"[199]. Since the notions of consciousness, subjectivity and act seem to imply a form of givenness that can only be realized within the conscious life of the individual, their extension to the life of the community may appear as an unfounded hypostatization. What kind of givenness characterizes the suprapersonal consciousness, or, to whom is it given?

As I already pointed out, however, for Husserl the notions of consciousness, subjectivity and person were not defined as static notions that could be identified with the undisturbed reflexivity of the self. Through his reflections concerning the genetic development of consciousness, Husserl began to understand the phenomenon of subjectivity essentially in terms of *temporal development* – a genesis – for the sake of which individual affects and acts are conjoined with each other. Subjectivity, according to this account, was to be understood in terms of constant *habituation* through

[197] Schütz 1975: 39.
[198] Ricoeur 1991: 244.
[199] Carr 1987: 268.

which these affects and acts unify themselves into the form of permanent personal characters. As Husserl put it in *Ideas* II, although this process realizes itself originally within the genetic development of the individual ego, it does not restrict itself merely to this – instead, as we consider the interpersonal modes of affectivity and activity we discover an analogical process of habituation:

> In the course of these temporal ego-events, the person is constituted originally as person, i.e., as substrate of personal characters, as, in its temporal being, substrate-unity. […] If one studies the person in his unity, which manifests itself in his acts and affections, then one studies how he "affects" other persons and likewise how he spiritually undergoes effects from them, and furthermore one studies how personalities of a higher order are constituted, how individual persons and collective personalities of a higher level perform, how as correlates of their spiritual performances cultural objectivities and cultural arrangements are constituted, now individual persons, communal personalities, and cultural formations develop, in which forms they do so, in what typicality, etc.[200]

To speak of the collective persons as "higher order" phenomena refers exactly to this idea: communities as personal wholes are inextricably *founded* on the acts of individual egos. However, as the acts of individual subjects associate with each other, they are also able to constitute lasting unities that have their unique style and habitus. A music orchestra, for instance, acquires for itself a personal form through the association of individual acts (e.g. different musicians playing different patterns) and affects (feelings, moods etc.) – its unique style is due to its common history constituted in the group activity. This entails that the performed musical piece is to be conceived, not only as an end product of distinct individuals, but as something whose uniqueness originates from the personal style of the

[200] „Im Gang dieser zeitlichen Ich-Vorkommnisse konstituiert sie sich ursprünglich als Person, d.i. als Substrat personaler Charaktere, in ihrem zeitlichen Sein als Substrateinheit. […] Studiert man die einheitliche Persönlichkeit, die sich in ihren Akten und Affektionen bekundet, so studiert man, wie sie auf andere Persönlichkeiten „wirkt" und ebenso geistig von ihnen Wirkungen erfährt, wie Personalitäten höherer Ordnung sich konstituieren, wie Einzelpersönlichkeiten und höherstufig kollektive Persönlichkeiten Leistungen vollziehen, wie als Korrelat ihres geistigen Leistens Kulturgegenständlichkeiten, Kulturordnungen usw. sich konstituieren, wie Einzelpersönlichkeiten und Gemeinschaftspersönlichkeiten, wie Kulturgebilde sich entwickeln, in welchen Formen, in welcher Typik und was dergleichen mehr." HuaIV: 357–358.

community itself. Thus, on the basis of this specific conjoining of individual acts, we are able to acknowledge a conscious life of a higher order:

> Consciousness unites with consciousness, overlapping time in the form simultaneity as well as in chronological order. Personal consciousness becomes one with others [...] and constitutes a unity of a suprapersonal consciousness.[201]

It is exactly here that we encounter the crucial difference between Husserl's position and the Hegelian account of "objective spirit" (as presented in the first part of the work). Although Husserl's earlier manuscripts occasionally refer to the Hegelian notions of "objective spirit" (*objektiver Geist*)[202] and "collective spirit" (*Gemeingeist*)[203], his theory of community differed from that of Hegel's in one crucial respect. Husserl insisted that in order to arrive at an accurate transcendental account of human communities, one should insist on the conceptual difference between the intrapersonal collective and its accomplishments, that is, the difference between community (*Gemeinschaft*) as a habituated form of individual activities and culture (*Kultur*) as the objective accomplishments of this community.[204] Whereas Hegel's notion of objective spirit seemed to conflate these two aspects under the title of objective spirit (cf. Ch. 1.1), Husserl insisted on the essential difference between the two. A particular social whole cannot be simply reduced to its own accomplishments – language, religion, science, or even the relations of production – for this would entail that we fail to appreciate the differences that prevail in their formation. A community has its habitual character only within the life of the individuals and the unity of their social acts, but culture has its permanent duration in the objective accomplishments (e.g. accomplishments that are materialized in writing). These aspects, of course, belong inherently together, for the sense of cultural accomplishments is constantly vivified by the personal community. However, as in the case of Rosetta stone, the extinction of a particular community and its habitual unity of acts does not necessarily

[201] "Bewusstsein vereinigt sich so mit Bewusstsein, alle Zeit übergreifend, übergreifend die Zeit in Form der Gleichzeitigkeit wie in Form der Zeitfolge. Personales Bewusstsein wird eins mit anderem, individuell von ihm notwendig getrennten Bewusstsein, und so wird Einheit eines überpersonalen Bewusstseins." HuaXIV: 199.
[202] HuaXIII: 65n2; HuaXV: 559.
[203] HuaXIV: 165, 192, 200; HuaXXVII: 53.
[204] On the definition of culture in Husserl, see Orth (1987: 116ff.) and Hart (1992b)

do away with the possibility of understanding its accomplishments, or, the process of sedimentation that is characteristic to these.

This contrast to Hegel can also be elucidated from an socio-ethical point of view. As I pointed out in chapter 1.3, Hegel conceived world history in terms of a dialectical development, in which particular formations of culture – styles of artistic representations, forms of political institutions – are superseded with new ones. Although Hegel's notion of spirit allowed for a teleological reading of this development – old culture is not merely replaced but also preserved in temporal genesis – he seemed to endow the capability of renewal primarily into the hands of individual subjects. "Objective spirit", as it acquires for itself a lasting form in the spirit of a time, is constantly prone to the loss of meaning through cultural alienation; however, it is only through great "world-historical individuals" who transcend their own spirit of time that history realizes its reformatory potential. Thus for Hegel, cultural renewal takes place essentially through individual human subjects, "who appear to draw the impulse of their life from themselves", but who secretly follow the demands of the world-spirit.[205] Against this account of cultural development through individual action, through hidden motives ("cunning of reason") and often violent outbursts, Husserl wanted to develop an idea of communal renewal that would take its point of departure from the demands of intersubjective co-operation and the complete transparency of means and goals:

> A particular humanity can and must be viewed truly as a "human at large", and also in its possibility for self-definition in communal-ethical regard. Hence, it must be thought as being expected to define itself ethically. This possibility, however, must be examined in its principal possibility, and it must be made univocally demanding, so that it allows practical definition in disclosed eidetic possibilities and normative necessities that can be discovered through investigation.[206]

[205] Hegel 1899: 30.

[206] „Eine Menschheit kann wirklich, und muß, als „Mensch im großen" betrachtet und dann gemeinschaftsethisch als sich möglicherweise selbstbestimmende, somit auch als sich ethisch bestimmen-sollende gedacht werden. Dieser Gedanke aber muß in seiner prinzipiellen Möglichkeit geklärt, zwingend einsichtig gemacht und nach Erforschung der in ihm beschlossenen Wesensmöglichkeiten und normativen Notwendigkeiten praktisch bestimmend werden." HuaXXVII: 22

Hence, individual ethics was to be supplemented with *social ethics* – "the ethics of communities *as* communities"[207] – clarifying the modes of self-inspection, self-critique and renewal characteristic of personalities of a higher order. Communities, like individual subjects, were to be conceived as being able to understand themselves as subjective totalities, as embodying a personal history through habituation and sedimentation of meaning. Moreover, they were to be treated as being able to reflect their total history in mutual understanding, as potentially capable of renewing themselves in the course of time through social co-operation.

What this insight revealed was nothing less than the idea of a common foundation of *ethics* and *politics*. Against the modern tendency to treat the domains of individual and interpersonal co-operation as embodying distinct principles of justification, Husserl was aiming at rearticulating their common foundation within the reflexive capabilities of reason. This did not entail, however, that these domains would have been considered as univocally similar – for instance, as if we could do away with the essentially multivoiced character of political reality by introducing a particular institutional framework or an unequivocal model of political citizenship. As I will argue in part 4, Husserl located the common foundation of ethical and political life in the dynamic principles of critique and renewal, which delineated the formal condition for the idea of self-responsibility. Against the modern tendency to locate the best possible idea of political life in a particular institutional or material arrangement, the "political epoché" of phenomenology was to secure the essentially open character of political reflection.

Let us still consider the relation between community and culture. Although Husserl's concept of culture (*Kultur*) denoted the objective side of communal co-operation, this concept was to be understood in a rather broad sense. According to his definition, culture comprises nothing less than the "totality of accomplishments that come into being in the continuous activity of the communalized human beings"[208], ranging from simple cultural objects such as tools, works of art, and religious symbols to all sorts of oral traditions, abiding values, beliefs, and appreciations. These

[207] HuaXXVII: 22.

[208] "[…] Inbegriff der Leistungen, die in den fortlaufenden Tätigkeiten vergemeinschafteter Menschen zustande kommen […]" HuaXXVII: 21.

accomplishments, argues Husserl, "have their lasting spiritual existence in the unity of communal consciousness and its continuous tradition"[209] meaning that cultural objectivity always derives its sense from the social activity that founds it. For this reason, Husserl's notion of culture could not be equaled with the Hegelian objective spirit, for culture – as it emerges as the correlate of communal consciousness – also has a worldly dimension of its own. Owing to its "materialization" in different objects, practices, and institutions, culture allows itself to be transmitted in the course of generations.

The peculiar character of human culture, however, consists in its double role in the constitution of social reality. Though culture is indeed something *created* by a particular community, these objective accomplishments constantly function also as the presupposition of communal life itself. Social co-operation is always embedded in different cultural-historical horizons of meaning, which define the formation of communities in their turn. This insight is shown perhaps most evidently by the fact of language, the cultural objectivity *par excellence*. Language is not only produced, but constantly renewed by the community of speakers, novelists, poets and politicians; however, it is by learning language that one is, so to speak, incorporated into the community in the first place.

It is exactly here that we encounter a novel possibility for the formulation of Husserl's the *paradox of subjectivity*, according to which we find ourselves as both someone who constitute the world, but also as beings who belong to this world as constituted beings.[210] According to the "cultural" rendition of this idea, the human being is both the "subject as well as the object of culture"[211] – the one who lives in the midst of socio-cultural structures, but also the one who has the power to create them anew. Following Foucault, Husserl would have indeed agreed that subjectivity, as a category of lived experience, is *fundamentally* and *thoroughly* defined by social discourses, practices, and institutions – at the same time, however, it would be naïve to disregard the origin of our social and political institutions in human co-operation. What the human being has created, the human being can transform – and this goes also for the "human at large":

[209] "[…] die in der Einheit des Gemeinschaftsbewußtseins und seiner forterhaltenden Tradition ihr bleibendes geistiges Dasein haben." Ibid.
[210] HuaVI: 182ff.
[211] HuaXXVII: 41–42. See also HuaXXXIX: 300.

communities must be understood as self-regulating subjectivities that can acquire for themselves a critical relation to its cultural accomplishments. (I will return to the temporal or teleological implications of this idea in part 4.)

Not all communities, however, have the capability of producing such objectivities that would amount to be called culture in a pregnant sense. A group of people who share the same institutional conditions – for instance, prisoners who live in the same facilities and who are submitted to the rules, regulations, and a schedule – might be called a social grouping, but not one which jointly creates common accomplishments. Likewise, a person and a dog might embody a reciprocal relation to the extent that they recognize each other's desires, emotions and needs. This kind of association, which realizes itself through inactive "attraction" (*hineinziehen*) towards one's companions – what Husserl sometimes calls a "symbiotic community"[212] – announces itself, for instance, at the moment when somebody is missing.

However, in order to describe the kind of co-operation which makes possible the emergence of lasting cultural accomplishments, Husserl introduced the idea of *social and communicative acts*. These are acts through which individual subjects are able to communicate with each other in a way which makes possible the emergence of permanent ideas and meanings, i.e. objective ideality. As already Aristotle put it, whereas animals are capable of "communicating" (*hermeneuein*) with each other on the basis of natural expressions of pain, joy, longing etc., it is only through "symbolic" communication based on "mutual agreement" (*kata synthēken*) that this co-operation is able to produce for itself lasting objectivities. Not only do these objectivities make possible the emergence of human language, but they make possible the idea of common striving through shared goals, values, and beliefs. As Husserl puts it in *Ideas* II:

> Sociality is constituted by specifically *social, communicative acts*, acts in which the ego turns to others and in which the ego is conscious of these others as ones toward which it is turning, and ones which, furthermore, understand this turning, perhaps adjust their behavior to it and reciprocate by turning toward that ego in acts of agreement or disagreement, etc. It is these acts, between persons

[212] On the notion of "symbiotische Gesellschaft", see HuaXIII: 107.

> who already "know" each other, which foster a higher unity of consciousness and which include in this unity the surrounding world of things as the surrounding world common to the persons who take a position in regard to it.[213]

Let us illuminate this idea with the help of an example. As I agree to have a cup of coffee at a local café with a friend of mine, we begin to negotiate the most convenient route to our destination. I present my own alternative, which I believe is the quickest way to reach the place; my friend agrees, but she insists on taking the longer, though more peaceful route to the café. I consent to her option, but due to the rush, we agree to take the shorter way back. Thus by asserting each other's points of view, we have reached a common consensus: the end result we agreed upon was not chosen by an isolated individual but it was a result of a series of communicative acts leading to a joint decision. This was exactly what Husserl meant with suprapersonal consciousness: a unity of co-existing or successive acts leading to the constitution of a shared belief, decision or a telos. In this reciprocal activity, writes Husserl, "my act and his activity at the same time are a complex act which not only in part is immediately from him and only in part immediately dome by me or to be done by me" –

> In a higher founded sense the total action and achievement is mine and also his, even though each acts for himself immediately "in his share" of the matter and achieves a primary action which belongs exclusively to him; but this is also part of the secondary action which is founded and which has its completeness from both of us. So it is with all communal works.[214]

[213] " Die Sozialität konstituiert sich durch die spezifisch *sozialen, kommunikativen Akte*, Akte in denen sich das Ich an Andere wendet, und dem Ich diese Anderen auch bewußt sind als die, an welche es sich wendet, und welche ferner diese Wendung verstehen, sich ev. in ihrem Verhalten danach richten, sich zurückwenden in gleichstimmigen oder gegenstimmigen Akten usw. Diese Akte sind es, die zwischen Personen, die schon voneinander „wissen", eine höhere Bewußtseinseinheit herstellen, in diese die umgebende Dingwelt als gemeinsame Umwelt der stellungnehmenden Personen einbeziehen." HuaIV: 194.

[214] „Speziell was die Handlung anbelangt, so kann mein Wille darauf gehen, dass der Andere will, mag ich ihm es befohlen haben und ihn als unter meinem Befehl stehend ansehen, mag ich ihn willentlich auf andere Weise dazu bestimmt haben, dass er etwas tue, was für mich praktisch Gewolltes ist. Seine Tat ist dann mittelbar auch meine Tat, und ist das Verhältnis ein wechselseitiges, so ist meine Tat und seine Tätigkeit zugleich für mich eine komplexe Tat, die nur zu einem Teil von ihm und zu einem von mir unmittelbar getan und zu tuende war. Die gesamte Handlung und Leistung ist meine Handlung und ist auch seine Handlung im höheren, fundierten Sinn, während jeder für sich an „seinem Teil" unmittelbar an der Sache handelt und eine primäre Handlung vollzieht, die ausschliesslich die ihm

Of course, not all communities function as smoothly as in the case of the aforementioned example. We know that in the contexts of science, politics, and religion, it is exactly dissent, rather than consensus, that constitutes the prevalent mode of co-operation.[215] As it is often the case, different interest groups may even take their conflict on the level of language, which "fails" to execute its function as a common cultural objectivity. As in the case of dispute concerning the abortion legislation, the disagreement does not concern a mere praxis or "human rights", but the definition of life itself ("Where and when does *life* begin?"). As Marx already accentuated in *The German Ideology*, we ought to be critical towards the idea of language as a neutral cultural objectivity, which merely functions as the foundation for particular, "regional" disputes. Especially the language of philosophy, argued Marx, has the tendency of abstracting itself from the conflictual and changing character of the actual world, and to present itself as the "objective" description of societal reality.

As Husserl insisted, these discrepancies should not prevent us from considering the possibility of rational co-operation, in which all parties are acknowledged as equal contributors to the emergence of shared accomplishments. This idea was articulated by Husserl with the notion of "community of will" (*Willesgemeinschaft*), which not only lives according to shared cultural constraints – common language, law, morality – but which is able to reflect these accomplishments through common deliberation. In other words, a community of will is such that it can acknowledge its accomplishments as a product of common co-operation, and it is able to take a reflexive stance towards its own personal history:

> The most important issue is that the community is not a mere collective of individuals, and the communal life and its communal accomplishments are not a mere collective of individual lives and individual accomplishments [...] but a community as a community has a consciousness. As a community it can, however, have in the full sense a self-consciousness: It can have an appreciation of itself and a will to direct itself, a will to self-formation.[216]

eigene ist, die aber Teil der sekundären, fundierten ist, die die volle eines jeden von uns ist. So bei allen Gemeinschaftswerken." (HuaXIV: 193)

[215] On this point, see especially Zahavi 2001: 85ff.

[216] "Die bedeutsamste Tatsache ist aber die, daß die Gemeinschaft nicht ein bloßes Kollektiv der einzelnen und das Gemeinschaftsleben und die Gemeinschaftsleistung nicht ein bloßes Kollektiv der Einzelleben und der Einzelleistungen sind [...] eine Gemeinschaft als Gemeinschaft hat ein Bewußtsein, als Gemeinschaft kann sie aber auch ein Selbstbe-

Especially in the context of the *Kaizo* essays, this is what Husserl meant with the idea of a "personality of a higher order", which has the possibility of "carrying out communal accomplishments that are not mere collections of individual accomplishments, but that are in a genuine sense personal accomplishments of the community, its striving and will."[217] Let us note immediately that Husserl is not referring to the idea of complete and undisturbed consensus of individual wills. The idea of a personality of a higher order entails a critical and reflexive stance towards the habituated form of communal co-operation and not a single, "totalitarian" model of life permeating the lives of individuals. Ethical life, as already accentuated, was to be understood as a practical idea based on an active-reflexive stance towards the passively habituated objectivities, styles and convictions. As Husserl seems to suggest in several occasions, it is exactly through the diverging views – and not despite of them – that a community realizes its "common will", its will to self-formation. The unity of a community does not rest upon the "similarity of manners, forms of personal dealings, ways of thinking, opinions, scientific activity etc." but, as emphatically put it, on "persons who stand within a unity of a spiritual communion of action"[218]. I will return to this idea in the following parts, but now it suffices to say that it was exactly this introduction of the phenomenological correlation to the being-sense of communities that was able to separate Husserl's social ontology from the prevalent idealistic framework of Hegelian objective spirit.

Communities, as they emerge through the co-operation of individuals as well as on the grounds of pre-given cultural constraints, seem to embody two competing tendencies. They are both actively created as well as artificially maintained. In a manuscript from 1921–22, Husserl approvingly referred to Tönnies' distinction between "community" (*Gemeinschaft*)

wußtsein im prägnanten Sinn haben, sie kann eine Selbstwertung haben und auf sie sich richtenden Willen, Willen der Selbstgestaltung." HuaXXVII: 48–49.

[217] "Personalität höherer Ordnung werden und als solche Gemeinschaftsleistungen vollziehen nicht bloße Zusammenbildungen von einzelpersonalen Leistungen sind, sondern im wahren Sinne persönliche Leistungen der Gemeinschaft als solcher, in ihrem Streben und Wollen realisierte. HuaXXVII: 22.

[218] "Gemeinschaft besagt nicht Gleichheit von Arten, Formen personaler Handlungen, von Denkweisen, Meinungen, wissenschaftlichen Betätigungen etc., sondern in Gemeinschaft stehen Personen, die in solcher Hinsicht in der Einheit eines geistigen Wirkungszusammenhanges stehen, mag im einzelnen die Wirkung überall sichtlich werden oder nicht." (HuaXIV: 183)

and "society" (*Gesellschaft*), that is, between a unity of close co-operation and kinship characteristic of traditional communities, and an "artificial", top-down type of association characteristic of modern societies. Whereas Tönnies employed this distinction in order to account for the process of modernization (especially the emergence of class conflicts), which entails the primacy of *Gesellschaft*-type of co-operation, Husserl seemed to maintain that actually most of the known communities contain elements of both.

This discrepancy was particularly clear in Husserl's reflections on the state (*Staat*). On the one hand, Husserl follows the position of Tönnies by accentuating the "artificial" character of state and political institutions. In this respect, "state is unity through power, through domination"[219], a unity of relations of power ascribing the individual citizens their peculiar functions. Echoing Benedict Andersson's thesis on "imagined communities" Husserl emphasized the significance of "state-consciousness" as a peculiar modality within a collective subjectivity, a type of community which rests upon the horizontal unity of citizens, most of whom will never meet each other.[220] On the other hand, Husserl sometimes seems to refer to the state as a truly co-operative totality, one which rises through a "voluntary agreement"[221]. In this respect, a state can be conceived in terms of a personality of a higher order, expressing its ownmost being in an abiding common will, through constitution, or, for instance, through parliamentary elections.[222]

It is perhaps surprising to find out that Husserl, despite the somewhat idealistic undertone of his social considerations, relied again and again on bodily and even organic concepts and metaphors. By doing so, he naturally shared one of the fundamental tendencies of Western political philosophy described in part 1.2, i.e., the tradition of *body politic*. The reasons for this, I believe, are threefold. First, the bodily and spatial notions were employed in order to denote the specific *materiality* of human communities; secondly, they were used to describe the specific *intertwinement* characteristic of human sociality and the specific *autonomy* of the communal person; and thirdly, they were used to articulate the *normative ideal* of community,

[219] "Staat ist eine Einheit durch Macht. durch Herrschaft" (HuaXV: 412)
[220] HuaXIII: 110; HuaXIV: 182.
[221] HuaXV: 57
[222] HuaXIV: 405–406.

bringing together the idea of common good with the individual responsibility. Let me shortly address these points.

Firstly, one of the shortcomings of the nineteenth-century theories of community – especially the idealist formulations of objective spirit (Hegel) – was that they had failed to address the *concrete* or *material* aspects of communal life. Even those theories that explicitly wanted to address the material conditions of cultural life seemed to lead them back into a very restricted aspect of materiality such as "production relations" (Marx) or distribution of resources (T.R. Malthus). However, both communities as well as cultural accomplishments have their material aspects. As there is no community without the body of the people, there is no culture without relation to the material conditions (resources, landscape etc.), ultimately, earth.

In few occasions Husserl entertains the idea of "collective bodily existence" (*kollektive Leiblichkeit*) that communities acquire for themselves through their individual members.[223] Although this idea could be taken into several directions, Husserl discusses it primarily in relation to the spatial orientation. Recall that for Husserl, one of the main constitutive functions of the living body was related to the directionality of experience: every object is perceived as being "there" with regard to the "here" of the living body. Living body is the primal indexical "here", according to which every object is perceived as being "there", either "left" or "right", "up" or down", and so on. However, as being part of a certain community, our experience defines itself also with regard to another set of indexicals, those of the collective. As single bodies interact with one another in a certain place, these relations give birth to a higher-order directionality, which, for instance, allows a broader definition of the indexical "here". This is what Husserl means when he says that communities, like individual subjects, embody a form of I-centering.[224] A family, for instance, often defines its collective spatial orientation with regard to the "geo-historical horizon" of its homeworld, which serves as the zero-point of orientation for other places.

Secondly, in order to sketch out the relation between individual and collective, he sometimes calls upon the analogy of "a cell and an organism

[223] HuaXXXIX: 181.
[224] HuaXIV: 206.

built on cells", and also, on the analogy between organ and organism.[225] Moreover, this organic unity is not restricted merely to social relations between individuals, but Husserl uses it also to describe the intertwining of communities such as nations.[226] One of the primal reasons behind these metaphors was Husserl's insistence on the peculiar autonomy of collective subjects. "The organic unity of humanity", writes Husserl, "maintains itself in the birth of its individual members as well as their death, as in the case of the recreation of *multicellular organs* and their withering"[227]. In other words, a certain social body is never tied to any particular subject, but has its existence regardless of the entry or withdrawal of particular members. Naturally, there are gradations with regard to different forms of community. For a family, a loss of member is probably a more shattering experience than, say, in the case of nation – one that can catalyze the extinction or dispersion of the "we". Still, it belongs to the very notion of communal person that it has the possibility to transcend the individual streams of consciousness: it is something that cannot be returned to individual subjects.

Moreover, the idea that an individual always finds itself as being part of a "social tissue"[228] helps us to articulate the peculiar *reciprocality* that is at stake in the relation between individual and community. As I already indicated, one of the key theses of Husserl's analysis of intersubjectivity was the idea that without the apperceptive experience of other (possible) subjects, no form of objectivity could ever be constituted. Everything transcendent rests upon the transcendence of foreign subjectivity: like individual cells, we cannot sustain our essential "function" – the constitution of world and meaning – without being embedded in a community of subjects.[229] Thus, what we have in the case of the organic analogy is not a split between two autonomous spheres of being, but rather, a shift of perspectives. In concrete experience, we are always primarily dealing with organic totalities; however, it is of course possible to abstract from this totality and to pay attention to its particular elements, for instance, individual organs or individual cells.

[225] HuaXIV: 203. See also HuaXXVII: 118.
[226] HuaVI: 322. On historical relations as organic, see HuaVI: 502.
[227] HuaXIV: 205 (My italics).
[228] HuaXV: 413
[229] HuaVIII: 495.

The third insight – that Husserl employs bodily and organic metaphors to describe also the *normative ideal of community* – is perhaps the most controversial one. As we argued in the previous section (1.4), the early twentieth-century debate on cultural diseases – *crisis* – was spurred by false organic categories, which presented the whole idea of culture as essentially passive. Thus the question: Why would he imagine overcoming the dangerous organic prejudices by returning to the organic framework of body politic?

Now, the ideal of a self-regulating and autonomous community was sometimes characterized by Husserl as that of a "healthy" (*gesund*) or "vital" (*lebendig*) culture.[230] With this metaphor, Husserl did not mean a simple well-being of the community – each individual is "happy" and social conflicts are absent – nor did it entail an idea of robust productivity. What he meant was a more specific claim on the role of *philosophy* within the body politic. For according to Husserl, philosophy was supposed to be the very caretaker of communal reflexivity,

> […] the spiritual *organ*, in which the community establishes the consciousness of its true definition (its true self), and they are also called to be the *organ* for the *reproduction* of this consciousness among the "laypeople".[231]

Indeed, in his Vienna lecture, Husserl did in fact attribute philosophers the role of an "operating brain" (*fungierende Gehirn*) whose "healthy functioning" was essential to the present-day European humanity.[232] These "naturalistic" metaphors should not be taken too literally. As Husserl was well aware, philosophy was not a natural function of all cultures but a specific possibility of human co-operation, which emerged at the dawn of the Classical period of the Ancient Greek culture. However, these metaphors point towards the crucial insight of Husserl's social ethics in regard to the specific role or function of philosophical undertaking. As Husserl attested, his normative ideal of a "community of will" did not rest upon a

[230] HuaVIII: 242, HuaXXVII: 4. See also discussion on Fichte and cultural sickness in HuaXXV: 282–284.
[231] "Die Philosophen sind […] das geistige *Organ*, in dem die Gemeinschaft ursprünglich und fortdauernd zum Bewußtsein ihrer wahren Bestimmung (ihres wahren Selbst) kommt, und das berufene Organ für die Fortpflanzung dieses Bewußtseins in die Kreise der ‚Laien'." HuaXXVII: 54.
[232] HuaVI: 336.

one-sided relation of power and domination – what he sometimes calls by the Hegelian idea of Master and Slave (*Herr–Diener*)[233] – but on a shared responsibility of all parties. This seemed to imply that philosophers could not simply carry the burden of responsibility regardless of other people, but instead, it was the task of philosophy to reproduce (*fortpflanzen*) this idea among the non-philosophers. Thus philosophy, as Husserl understood it, had the crucial task of nurturing the "*habitus* of critique"[234] within the whole of body politic. The societal function of philosophy did not consist of informing individuals on "what to do" or "how to live" – rather, its task was that of *motivation*, the constant calling forth of critical self-inspection.

It was exactly this idea of communality which Husserl aimed at articulating as a response to the contemporary crisis of Europe. What Europe had lost was exactly this idea of communal co-operation leading to a mutual responsibility on the basis of an overarching generative horizon. The normative ideal of community based on the inalienable self-responsibility of individual subjects was not, however, something completely new. Instead, this ideal emerged as an inextricable feature of the classical (i.e. Platonic) motive of the philosophical praxis, with the idea of a universal "community of theory" and its emergence within the political domain.

[233] HuaXIV: 213, 223–224.
[234] HuaXXVII: 64.

— III —

Husserl on the Origin of Europe: Philosophy in its New Mode of Generativity and Historicity

A beginning is always a complicated matter. The start of the year, the development of a new piece of music, the birth of a child – these are all events that mark the start of something new, ruptures through which something previously non-existent breaks into the world of human beings. However, as types of inception, they are all different. In the world of natural entities, the emergence of something new is always based upon a homologous series of past instances; however, in the world of cultural objects, the very relationship to past instances (repetition, imitation, refutation) defines the whole mode of creation. Nevertheless, beginnings are also a matter of perspective. Taken from an objective standpoint, a beginning is indeed something that marks the event of creation or birth; from the perspective of accomplishments that are developed, the original rupture appears to be the primal point of origination. This is why Aristotle, while speaking of the different modes of origination in *Metaphysics* V. 1, extends the notion of beginning (*arkhē*) to mean the "first thing from which something is, or comes to be, or is known."[1] It is only from the perspective of actualized meaning or content that a "beginning" is turned into an "origin", that a particular event or moment is ascribed a meaning-originating character.

In this regard, origins – more than beginnings – are a matter of debate and contention. It is an inseparable feature of modern historiography and politics that they are in constant dispute over the origins of a particular historical phenomenon, a way of thinking, or a societal model. We like to think of origins, primarily, because it enables us to acknowledge a founding subjectivity as the driving force of human development (e.g. Galileo and the institution of modern natural sciences); without this subjectivity,

[1] Aristotle, *Met.* 1013a 18–19

history seems to fall outside the realm of responsible development. In some cases, however, origins are acknowledged in order to cover up the complexity of historical development as such. Foucault may be right in claiming that one of the most destructive features of our modern teleological view of history is that it seeks to present all origins as autonomous, self-sufficient events. "What is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin," writes Foucault in his essay on Nietzschean historiography, "– it is the dissension of other things."[23] Although we may agree with Foucault that historical beginnings can indeed be "derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation,"[4] it is likewise justifiable to point out the exact opposite tendency of our modern conception of the past: the evading of all questions of origin and genesis for the sake of the simple authority of the present moment. As Marx and Engels pointed out in *The German Ideology*, it is a common feature of all dominant ideologies that they expunge their histories by presenting the existing relations of power as natural – as if they had always existed.[5]

For Husserl, the birth of Greek philosophy denoted both a beginning and an origin. It was a beginning insofar as it introduced a novel practice, a new type of intellectual activity that strove towards the creation of previously unknown cultural accomplishments. Through the peculiar attitude the Greeks called *theoretical*, there emerged a new realm of *ideal truths*, which were regarded as devoid of all empirical content. However, this event was also an origin in the sense of a point of departure for a completely new type of cultural development – one which radically challenged pre-philosophical ideas of historicity and communality. Through the emergence of the theoretical attitude, philosophy gave rise to a radically new idea of intersubjective association – a new form of communal cooperation – which resisted the simple authority of tradition characteristic of the pre-philosophical (i.e., the mythical) world-view. Transferred to the sphere of culture, philosophy unfolded as a twofold critique of limits:

[2] Foucault 1984b: 79. The purpose of Foucault's own genealogy was to resist this tendency by "cultivating the details and accidents that accompany every beginning", to unfold the suppressive, and perhaps even violent character of historical inceptions.
[3] Foucault 1984b: 80.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Marx/Engels 1970: 47.

first, in the sense of relativizing or dismantling the unquestioned difference between home and alien characteristic of the mythical world-view, and second, in the sense of transcending the finite liminal structure of everyday praxis. In regard to the latter, philosophy opened up a novel horizon of practical activity which defined itself in relation to infinitely distant goals. By resisting the tendency to appear as an accomplishment achievable by a limited community, philosophy unfolded as a specific detachment from the territorial and temporal finitude of pre-philosophical humanity.

It was exactly this twofold detachment, I argue, that constituted the fundamental core of that form of culture Husserl called "European". Europe, as Husserl understood it, denoted not only the realized history of a particular continent, but a more specific idea of cultural development animated by the praxis of philosophy.[6] Philosophy, besides referring to the specific attitude of an individual, gave rise a completely new type of *generative development* that was able to transcend the immanent historicity and communality of pre-philosophical culture. In the sense employed by Husserl in his recurring use of the word, I will characterize this novel form of culture as "universal" and refer to its principle of development with the term "universalism". This is not to suggest that the whole of European history can be characterized solely by this principle: instead of rational co-operation, the history of European universalism has been as much a history of chauvinism – of political expansionism, crusades, and colonialism – and the result, contemporary globalization, is an extremely limited interpretation of the original idea. However, in order to understand what Husserl called the genuine sense of "Europeanization" we need to consider the idea in terms of its *origination*.

In this section, I want to illuminate Husserl's idea of the emergence of Greek philosophy from the perspective of generativity and historicity. In chapter 3.1, I will start by discussing Husserl's basic approach to the problematic of the origin of Greek philosophy and its revolutionary

[6] As Husserl put it in his letter to Radl in 1934, the spiritual concept of Europe was to be understood as a task, which consciously animates the development of the empirical Europe ("Europa in diesem geistigen Sinne ist also eine im empirischen Europa bewußtseinsmäßig lebendige Aufgabe […]" HuaXXVII: 241). As I will argue in part 4, this "animating process" ought to be distinguished from the Hegelian analysis of spirit's development, i.e., the idea of historical Theodicy.

significance. I will argue that Husserl approached this by the novel use of the vocabulary of spirituality, which, however, does not imply a simple dismissal of material or territorial conditions.

Instead, through his vocabulary of "spiritual geography," Husserl opened up the possibility of a novel teleological-historical approach to the problematic of generativity, most importantly, to the historically sedimented character of territoriality and culture. Following the genetic method of phenomenology, Husserl approached the origin of Greek philosophy in terms of a unique "primal establishment" (*Urstiftung*) whose genuine sense was to be discovered and acknowledged from the perspective of the present moment.

In chapter 3.2, I will focus on Husserl's interpretation of the generative background of philosophy. As I will show, besides precipitating a series of revolutions in the domains of historicity, territoriality and communality, philosophy itself was to be conceived of as the product of a particular generative and historical transformation. Through the close co-operation of Greek city-states, there emerged a novel form of critical attitude that aimed to overcome the seemingly natural division between home and alien – an attitude that had its foundation in the pre-philosophical practice of theoretical observation. This practice of *theoria*, which aimed to mediate between the validities of particular homeworlds, was an indication of the pressing need for concepts that could acknowledge both the inherently universal character of our experience and its culturally, historically and intersubjectively determined variety. As I will show, Husserl understood the emergence of the theoretical attitude to be closely connected to the dichotomy between a "national-traditional" and a "pure" notion of rationality; i.e., its emergence was essentially tied to the pre-philosophical transformations in the idea of generativity. Thus, territoriality, instead of denoting a simple factical condition of philosophy, turned out to be one of its *necessary conditions*.

In chapter 3.3 I will turn my attention to the "institutionalized" form of the theoretical attitude, i.e., the intersubjective practice of philosophy. It is my argument that Husserl understood this practice not only in terms of an individualistic posture, but in terms of a communal process of co-operation defined by cultural accomplishments previously unknown. By disclosing a domain of purely ideal truths, philosophy was able to open

up a completely new horizon of production, which did not demarcate itself according to a particular homeworld, its unique tradition and cultural validities. Instead, this horizon unfolded itself as a completely new type of generative and historical development, that of universal historicity according to an all-encompassing community of philosophers. This idea of an "infinite task", I argue, unfolded itself as a twofold deconstruction of liminality: (i) as an urge to overcome the generative divisions of homeworld and alienworld for the sake of the all-encompassing shared world of philosophical ideality, and (ii) as the transcending of the finite limits of practical activity for the sake of the infinitely distant (inexhaustible) teleological ideals of the philosophical praxis. This transformation realized itself also as a specific cultural intervention targeted at some of the most central societal and communal practices and structures, e.g. language and education.

Lastly, in chapter 3.4, I will focus on a specific form of cultural transformation most central from the overall perspective of this work: political universalism. As I will show, Husserl's renewed understanding of the inextricably communal character of philosophical undertaking was also reflected in his analysis on the centrality of the social-ethical aspect of Greek political thought, especially that of Plato. The Platonic motive of idealism was not restricted merely to the domain of scientific ideality, but it brought within itself a completely new horizon of societal and political co-operation, which aimed at formulating the conditions of best possible communality on the basis of the infinite horizon of philosophy. This movement, which I would like to describe as the "political *epoche*" of Greek thought, executed itself as a specific rupture in the unquestioned unity of ethnic political citizenship. However, despite the inherent emphasis on the ideal character of *polis* as well as the teleological character of human sociality, both Plato and Aristotle still conceived the domain of political community as essentially demarcated – as something which can sustain itself only with the help of nature's fundamental antithesis, the "law" (*nomos*). It is my argument that it was exactly this idea on the essentially "divided" character of the political body that constituted the basic point of departure for Husserl's critical stance (discussed in the fourth part of the work).

3.1. The Question of Origin: Teleology and Universalism

As I argued earlier, the point of departure for Husserl's reflections on Europe was the novel methodological idea of teleological-historical reflection. Proceeding through what he called a critical "questioning-back" (*Rückfrage*) to inherited cultural accomplishments, this reflection was supposed to reveal the present moment as dependent on a set of teleological developments: the objectivities and validities we live by point towards their origination through a variety of primal and secondary establishments (*Urstiftungen* and *Nachstiftungen*). By locating this process not only within the conscious life itself (the genetic method) but also within the historical process of cultures and communities, Husserl was able to open up a wholly new domain of generativity, the establishment and transmission of sense from one historical generation to the next.

Especially in texts devoted to the problematic of crisis, Husserl employed this method in order to uncover the teleological origins of contemporary demise of rationality, apparent from the loss of personal responsibility and the dispersion of scientific methodology. As I already pointed out, Husserl traced this demise back to the Galilean discovery of exact mathematical ideality as the basic blueprint of physical nature – a discovery that rendered the categories of teleology, purpose and unity fundamentally unscientific, i.e., subjective. By doing so, consequently, this transition presented a serious challenge to the social and political thought of modern philosophy, which could no longer hold on to the naturalness of human sociality and had to construct its legitimacy from the idea of a common agreement. However, to say that the Galilean discovery instigated a crisis for a certain idea seemed to imply that something had existed beforehand; *some idea had to be presupposed in order for the crisis to come about*.

This something, Husserl argued, was the very idea of universal, scientific rationality – a rationality which Husserl interpreted as fundamentally constitutive to the idea of Europe. However, its "primal establishment" was not to be located at the beginning of the modern age but in the emergence of the Classical period of the Ancient Greek culture:

> Spiritual Europe has a birthplace. By this I mean not a geographical birthplace, in one land, though this is also true, but rather a spiritual birthplace in a nation or in individual men and human groups of this nation. It is the ancient Greek nation in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Here there arises a new sort of attitude of individuals toward their surrounding world. And its consequence is the breakthrough of a completely new sort of spiritual structure, rapidly growing into a systematically self-enclosed cultural form; the Greeks called it philosophy.[7]

From the perspective of Husserl's overall *oeuvre*, the use of the notion "spiritual" (*geistig*) may appear surprising. Almost univocally absent from his work between 1890 and 1917, we find the notions of "spirit" and "spiritual" to be recurring themes in Husserl's manuscripts on personality, intersubjectivity, and the lifeworld – beginning with *Ideas* II (under the title "Constitution of the Spiritual World") and the 1919 lecture series "Nature and Spirit" (*Natur und Geist*).[8] In Husserl's later writings, we find this term in the recurring formulations "spiritual Europe" and its "spiritual geography", which give rise to a specific "spiritual form" and "spiritual culture".[9] Particularly in the context of Husserl's Vienna Lecture, this emphasis on the spiritual grew into an almost Hegelian account of the autonomy and self-sufficiency of the spirit ("The spirit, and indeed only the spirit, exists in itself and for itself, is self-sufficient [...] for the spirit alone is immortal"[10]) – an emphasis which seemed to question the fundamentally personalistic and concrete character of phenomenological description.[11]

[7] "Das geistige Europa hat eine Geburtsstätte. Ich meine damit nicht geographisch in einem Land, obschon auch das zutrifft, sondern eine geistige Geburtsstätte in einer Nation, bzw. in einzelnen Menschen und menschlichen Gruppen dieser Nation. Es ist die altgriechische Nation im 7. und 6. Jahrhundert V. Chr. In ihr erwächst eine neuartige Einstellung einzelner zur Umwelt. Und in ihrer Konsequenz vollzieht sich der Durchbruch einer völlig neuen Art geistiger Gebilde, rasch anwachsend zu einer systematisch geschlossenen Kulturgestalt; die Griechen nannten sie Philosophie." HuaVI: 321. On the notion of "primal establishment" in regard to the emergence of Greek philosophy, see HuaVI: 72: "In dieser [griechische Urstiftung] liegt der *teleologische Anfang,* die wahre Geburt des europäischen Geistes überhaupt." Cf. HuaXXVII: 186ff.

[8] On the notions of "spirit" (*Geist*) and "spiritual" (*geistig*), see HuaI: 112; HuaIV: 172ff.; HuaVI: 114–117, passim.; HuaXXV: 267–293; HuaMatIV: 118–150.

[9] On the notion of "spiritual [form of] Europe", see HuaVI: 318–321, 336, 549. Husserl also refers to the spiritual "space" (*Raum*) of Europe, see HuaXXIX: 58.

[10] "Der Geist und sogar nur der Geist ist in sich selbst und für sich selbst seiend, ist eigenständig [...] Denn der Geist allein ist unsterblich." HuaVI: 345–348.

[11] The relation between Hegel's notion of spirit and Husserlian generativity has been explicitly discussed by Steinbock 1998a: 163–176.

Why such a transition? In Husserl's texts from the late 1910s and early 1920s, the topic of the spirit was introduced in relation to two respective domains of constitution: those of material nature and of animal (*seelische*) nature. Especially in the context of *Ideas* II, the notion of the spirit was articulated in close connection to the topic of intersubjectivity and its respective accomplishment (i.e., the world of cultural objects), denoting the specific stratification of meaning made possible by social relations. "For every subject that in this way is a member of a social association as a totality," Husserl wrote, "there is constituted one and the same world of spirit."[12] Here, the notion of spirit served the double purpose of being both the animating principle of cultural objectivities as well as the binding force of what Husserl called the 'communal spirit' (*Gemeingeist*) of intersubjective associations. Thus, it seems that phenomenology, as it was applied to the domains of culture, history and social relations, could no longer abide in the univocally "Cartesian-Kantian" vocabulary of consciousness, ego and subjectivity. Instead, it needed to be in dialogue with the inherently Hegelian doctrine of the spirit, which referred to the inextricably communal and historical development of sense and validity. Moreover, this notion provided a means of approaching the problematic of "natural" and "human" sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) – a distinction that had been addressed widely by such philosophers as Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert and Münsterberg.[13]

Following this emphasis on the spiritual, Derrida raised a series of questions concerning the consistency and scope of Husserl's thinking on Europe. Derrida claimed that as a result of his emphasis on the spiritual, Husserl's discourse on cultural differences shifted from the sphere of material geography to that of ideal meanings and meaning-structures. This entailed that Europe – which Husserl understood in terms of an "idea" or a "spiritual form" – was no longer "assigned a geographical or territorial outline".[14] As in the case of Hegel's delineation of Europe as a specific phase in the development of the spirit – reason as concrete universality (cf. Introduction) – Husserl's Europe was likewise able to transcend its

[12] "Für jedes Subjekt, das in dieser Weise Glied eines sozialen Gesamtverbandes ist, konstituiert sich eine und dieselbe, obschon vom „Standpunkt" dieses Subjekts mit einem entsprechenden […] Auffassungssinn aufgefaßte und gesetzte Geisterwelt." HuaIV: 197.
[13] Ricoeur 1967: 68ff.
[14] Derrida 1987: 95.

territorial boundaries and proclaim itself the ideal principle of universal rationality. However, as Derrida points out, Husserl's delineation of the "spiritual geography" of Europe was by no means indifferent to the cultural or ethnic divisions of his own time. According to Husserl's highly controversial analysis, the "spiritual-geographical" demarcation of Europe included the United States, the English Dominions – and perhaps even Japan, which Husserl considered "a fresh branch of European culture".[15] At the same time, this analysis excluded a wide variety of non-European peoples, including "gypsies", "Indians" and "Eskimos".[16] Thus, as Derrida observes, this idea of spiritual geography appears simply "ludicrous" and illogical, an example of the deep "metaphysical racism" of Husserl's philosophy.[17]

This is not, however, what Husserl had in mind. As he emphasized on several occasions, the domains of "nature", "animality" and "spirit" were not to be understood as distinct domains of being *per se*; instead, they were to be seen as closely intertwined modalities of constitution. Husserl spoke, for instance, of the idea of "spiritual nature" (*geistige Natur*)[18] as a "complex" composed of the lower stratums of material and animal nature that pointed towards the essential connection between these modalities. We constantly encounter nature as "spiritualized" (*vergeistigt*), as something which incorporates (*verkörpert*) all kinds of cultural, historical, religious and ideological meanings.[19] From the simple cultural objects, such as tools, to higher level social practices, such as the natural sciences, all spiritual or ideal meanings have their common foundation in the natural. This does not mean, however, that they can be simply traced back to material nature. As we saw in our example of the Emperor's New Clothes, spiritual meaningfulness need not even imply an intuitive givenness for an individual; rather, it can be sustained merely on the basis of interpersonal association and its peculiar mode of habituation. However, without a shared lifeworld, which is necessarily corporeal and which functions as the correlate of the interpersonal community, we could not even constitute purely ideal meanings. Pure geometry, for instance, has its foundation in

[15] HuaVI: 318. On Japan, see HuaXXVII: 95. Cf. Welton 2000: 306–330.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Derrida 1987: 119.
[18] HuaIV: 29.
[19] See e.g. HuaVI: 220; HuaVIII: 123, 151; HuaXIII: 469; HuaXV: 321.

the natural shapes that we encounter within our lifeworld – shapes which are then further idealized into pure forms (e.g., lines, squares, circles).

Hence, while Husserl emphasized the need to distance his analysis from the empirical geography of his own time ("Europe, not as it is understood geographically, as on a map"[20]), contrary to Derrida's claims, this did not entail a complete separation from concrete, material reality. As I argued in chapter 2.3, Husserl's analysis of homeworld and alienworld was not to be read as an alternative discourse to geographical conditions but as a description of the geo-historical process of individuation of a particular lifeworld in regard to alien frameworks of meaning. Understood in its phenomenological sense, territoriality was, above all, a "spiritual" category demarcating the difference between familiarity and strangeness – a difference which also localizes itself in the natural world.[21] Nevertheless, it is only *some* rivers, gulfs, tree lines or mountains that come to form the boundary between the familiar and the strange; therefore, mere geography does not explain the constitution of this division. For the Romans of the 2nd century, it was the rivers Danube and Rhine that served this purpose of demarcation – they separated the Romans from the barbaric Germans – but the Tiber merely united the Romans in their common settlement. All cultures and not merely Europe are defined by a specific "spiritual geography", insofar as they constitute for themselves a sphere of familiarity. What was constitutive to the idea of Europe, Husserl claimed, was that it emerged as a specific form of this geography – as a unique idea of generativity.

Hence, the vocabulary of spirituality did not refer to any kind of idealistic position. It was employed in order to describe the inherently "realist" dimension of cultural accomplishments, including those animated by the praxis of philosophy. In other words, it was through the nomenclature of spirituality that Husserl was able to relocate the emergence of different "establishments" (*Stiftungen*) within the domains of interpersonal co-operation, of community and culture. For him, spirit denoted nothing less than that moment of transgression which, through the reciprocal understanding characteristic of intersubjective associations, introduced the domain of cultural meanings into the world of nature. Thus, spirit – as it unfolded in

[20] "Also Europa nicht geographisch, landkartenmäßig verstanden […]" HuaVI: 318.
[21] See e.g. HuaXV: 206

the various processes of historical, cultural, and intersubjective sedimentation of meaning – coincided with the idea of the teleological development of sense within interpersonal communities. Spirituality was, to put it simply, the basic principle of generativity, and it consequently provided the basic point of departure for the teleological-historical "questioning-back" of the idea of Europe.

How, then, did the question of the origins of Europe emerge within Husserl's phenomenology? Although it has become common to view the lectures on *Erste Philosophie* (1923/24) as the starting point of Husserl's historical interest – as the first occurrence of the phenomenological *Rückfrage* through the "critical history of ideas"[22] – many of the manuscripts from the post-WWI period reveal Husserl's preoccupation with the historical origins of (European) philosophy. Besides the lectures on "first philosophy", Husserl discussed the Greek inception – especially Plato – in an introductory course of lectures in 1922–23 as in the as yet unpublished lecture series *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1919/20).[23] In particular, the latter series of lectures course provides us with a rich and detailed discussion on Plato, which even includes references even individual dialogues (this is something that we lack in Husserl's later, rather scattershot remarks).

In a way, the figure of Plato evidently embodies overall "genetic conversion" in Husserl's account of European philosophy. Whereas, for the early Husserl, Plato had primarily represented a particular theoretical-philosophical movement – Platonic idealism, the view of concepts as essential, a priori features of reality – in the writings of the post-WWI period, we discover a figure that stands for the origin of Western philosophical praxis at large, "the father of genuine and rigorous science"[24]. Plato became the principal originator of that cultural formation we call philosophy and the primal instigator of that process in which Europe attained completely new type of generativity.[25] "Should I name the philosophers that, under the impression rising from my conviction, light up the whole historical development of philosophy for me", Husserl wrote, "I would name two

[22] HuaVII: 3ff.
[23] See HuaXXXV for the 1922/23 course; the manuscript F I 40/8ff. for the 1919/20.
[24] "…wird er [Platon] zum Vater aller echten und strengen Wissenschaft." HuaXXXV: 53. Already in texts that date from 1917, Husserl occasionally entertains the historical-temporal trajectory that goes from Plato to modern philosophy, to Descartes and Kant. See HuaXXV: 271, 297.
[25] HuaXXIX: 17.

[…] in the first place the completely, fully unique Plato."[26] In second place, though in hierarchical not chronological order, Husserl placed Descartes, the initiator of the transcendental-subjectivist motif that characterizes the philosophy of the modern age. This formula of Greek *Urstiftung* of philosophy and its modern *Nachstiftung*, leading to its full, apodictic formulation (the *Endstiftung*) in phenomenology – the trajectory of Plato–Descartes–Husserl – was something that remained at the heart of Husserl's philosophical convictions until the end of his career.

At the same time, Husserl's interest in Plato broadened significantly from the scope of scientific evidence towards general questions of normativity, culture and sociality. Especially in the context of the *Kaizo* essays, *Erste Philosophie* and the lectures on ethics (1920/24),[27] Husserl's main interest seemed to turn towards the practical ideals of Plato, especially the Socratic idea of philosophy as a form of vocational life and the Platonic view of social ethics. What these reflections revealed was the inherent connection between the domains of theory and praxis, of ontology and ethics – and how this connection was employed to point towards the crucial intertwining of the individual and the community. Husserl argued that, for Plato, theory was not understood as the isolated activity of a community of philosophers defining themselves *against* the world of everyday praxis. On the contrary, for Plato "science is called to acquire the role of *hēgemonikon* [the governing reason] of all communal life and therefore the whole of culture."[28] In its Platonic form, argued Husserl, philosophy no longer remains a mere individual undertaking; rather, it necessarily becomes a quest for true and genuine culture: "*Under the title of philosophy is the idea of rigorous science out of free reason the overarching and all-embracing idea of culture*."[29]

It should be emphasized here, however, that when we speak of "Husserl's Plato", we are indeed referring to a *figure* rather than the *propria persona*, of Plato as a historical person living in Attica in the 5th and 4th century

[26] "Sollte ich heute unter dem aspekt der mir zugereiften überzeugungen sagen welche philosophern mir im rückblick auf die gesamte historische entwicklung der philosophie vor allem entgegenleuchten, so würde ich zwei nennen […] An erster stelle den allerdings ganz einzigen Platon […]". HuaXXXV: 52.

[27] Published as the part XXXVII of Husserliana.

[28] HuaVII: 15

[29] *"Unter dem Titel Philosophie ist die Idee strenger Wissenschaft aus freier Vernunft die übergreifende und allherrschende Kulturidee."* HuaXXVII: 89.

BC. All in all, Husserl's showed little interest in interpretative questions about Greek philosophy (in contrast to Brentano or Heidegger's delicate and precise readings). That being said, Husserl did not attempt to conceal his nonchalant attitude towards exegetical issues; instead, he proclaimed it quite openly:

> I read my Plato, I construct for myself the unified, meaningful philosophy of 'my' Plato, and this construction becomes a power in my philosophical life. I do not concern myself in the least about the philological distinction between authentic and unauthentic writings, to say nothing of philologically correct texts. In short, I do not seriously concern myself with the construction of the historically real Plato. "My" Plato would remain for me even if in the end all his writings turned out to be false attributions. It is in this way that every historical but also contemporary philosopher exercises a power over my philosophical life: as my "poetic fiction", and therefore independently of the question of the degree to which my interpretation corresponds or not to factual-historical truth.[30]

Now, by claiming Plato as his "own", Husserl was not simply adhering to subjective opinion, as if philosophical tradition was merely a matter of drawing inspiration for personal reasons. Rather, what Husserl implied with the peculiar "mineness" of his Plato was the idea of the inextricable self-responsibility that dictates all genuine philosophical interpretations.[31] We must arrive at Plato's insights from the viewpoint of the present moment and not from traditionally inherited themes, topics and questions. At the same time, because of the insurmountable temporal asymmetry between the past and the present, all historical interpretations involve

[30] "Ich lese meinen Plato, konstruiere mir eine sinnvolle einheitliche Philosophie "meines" Plato, und diese Konstruktion wird zur Macht in meinem philosophierenden Leben. Ich kümmere mich nicht im mindesten um eine philologische Scheidung echter und unechter Schriften, geschweige denn um philologisch korrekte Texte, also mit einem Worte, nicht ernstlich um eine Konstruktion des historisch wirklichen Plato. "Meine" Plato verbliebe mir schlienlich auch, wenn alle Schriften unterschoben waren. In dieser Weise wirkt jeder vergangene, aber auch gegenwartige Philosoph auf mich als eine mein philosophisches Leben bestimmende Macht, als der meiner "Dichtung", also unabhangig von der Frage, wieweit meiner Interpretation historisch-faktische Wahrheit entspricht oder nicht." HuaXXIX: 49. On Husserl's historical reading of Classics, see also the short appendix "Das Verhältnis des Phänomenologen zur Geschichte der Philosophie" in HuaXXV: 206–208. Here, Husserl insisten in going "back to Plato […] to his original works." (**"Zurück zu Pla**ton […] und zu ihren originalen Werken." HuaXXV: 206). Cf. HuaVI: 71–74.

[31] HuaVI: 511

an element of "poetic fiction" (*Dichtung*) – they are creative readings that originate from the present moment and its peculiar horizon.[32] In this regard, the genuine "originality" of Plato is always decided in retrospect, for it is only in the light of the historical generation of meaning that the idea of origin makes sense. "Every historical philosopher executes his self-reflections," Husserl wrote, "[in discourse with] the philosophers of his present and past" –

> He enunciates himself about all this, and fixes his own position through these confrontations, and thus creates a self-understanding of his own deeds in accord with the way his published theories have grown up within him in the consciousness of what he was striving for. But no matter how precisely we may be informed, through historical research, about such "self-interpretations" (even about those of a whole series of philosophers), we learn nothing in this way about what, through all these philosophers, "the point of it" ultimately was, in the hidden unity of intentional inwardness which alone constitutes the unity of history. Only in the final establishment (*Endstiftung*) is this revealed; only through it can the unified directedness of all philosophies and philosophers open up. From here elucidation can be attained which enables us to understand past thinkers in a way that they could never have understood themselves.[33]

What Husserl confirmed here was basically the old Hegelian doctrine that the owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shade of night is gathering: only the end can reveal the purpose of the beginning. We can acknowledge the significance of the beginning of philosophy only in retrospect, for the genuine sense of this project can only be recognized only from that perspective of fullest clarity. This is what Husserl means when he says that in every genuine *Urstiftung*, the *Endstiftung* is already ascribed not as a pre-

[32] On the idea of historical interpretation as a form of poetic invention, see Ch. 4.1

[33] "Jeder historische Philosoph vollzieht seine Selbstbesinnungen, führt seine Verhandlungen mit den Philosophen seiner Gegenwart und Vergangenheit. Er spricht sich über all das aus, fixiert in solchen Auseinandersetzungen seinen eigenen Standort, schafft sich so ein Selbstverständnis über sein eigenes Tun, wie denn auch seine veröffentlichten Theorien in ihm erwachsen sind in dem Bewußtsein dessen, daß er darauf hinwollte. Aber wenn wir durch historische Forschung noch so genau über solche "Selbstinterpretationen" (und sei es auch über die einer ganzen Kette von Philosophen) unterrichtet werden, so erfahren wir daraus noch nichts über das, worauf „es" letzlich in der verborgenen Einheit intentionaler Innerlichkeit, welche allein Einheit der Geschichte ausmacht, in all diesen Philosophen "hinauswollte"." HuaVI: 74. Translation slightly modified. On the idea of "hidden unity" in historical development, see Gurwitsch 1956: 384ff.

established doctrine but as a *task* to be realized by future generations. It is what Heidegger later termed by the name "inception" (*Anfang*) that, in contrast to the mere "beginning" (*Beginn*), denotes origin which "by contrast first comes to appear in the course of events and is fully there only when the course of events ends."[34] It is only the inherited development of sense – its conflicts, intrusions and one-sided interpretations – which enables us to comprehend the genuine sense of this undertaking.

According to Husserl's somewhat controversial view, it was exactly phenomenology that had brought fundamental clarity to this task: "It is my conviction that intentional phenomenology has made of the *spirit qua spirit* for the first time a field of systematic experience and science and has thus brought about the total reorientation of the task of knowledge."[35] Husserl understood phenomenology not only as a continuation of the Platonic movement of philosophy but as a completely new level in this development – a level which brings the genuine sense of this movement into relief.[36] This seeming *Endstiftung* of philosophy was not to be understood in terms of a Hegelian "end of history" or a Heideggerian "end of philosophy", i.e., as the exhaustion of the development of spirit. Instead, it merely denoted the basic clarity concerning the foundations of philosophical methodology as such. Phenomenology, Husserl claimed, had brought full clarity to the method of philosophy; it was the first philosophical enterprise that had succeeded in articulating the universal foundations of theoretical, practical and axiological evidence. At the same time, however, it had revealed

[34] "Der Beginn wird alsbald zurückgelassen, er verschwindet im Fortgang des Geschehens. Der Anfang, der Ursprung, kommt dagegen im Geschehen allererst zum Vorschein und ist voll da erst an seinem Ende." Heidegger GA 39: 3.

[35] "Es ist meine Überzeugung, daß die intentionale Phänomenologie zum ersten Male den Geist als Geist zum Feld systematischer Erfahrung und Wissenschaft gemacht und dadurch die totale Umstellung der Erkenntnisaufgabe erwirkt hat." HuaVI: 346–347.

[36] See e.g. the Beilage XXVI to the *Crisis:* "Philosophy and the cultivation of the European culture. Philosophy of the first level, world-cognition, human cognition – this is the second level of historicity, and the second level of humanity. The third level is the transformation of philosophy into phenomenology with its scientific consciousness of humanity in its history, and in the function of returning into a humanity that lets itself consciously to be guided by philosophy as phenomenology." ("Philosophie und Bildung der europäischen Kultur. Philosophie erster Stufe, Welterkenntnis, Menschenerkenntnis; das ist die zweite Stufe der Historizität, mit einer zweiten Stufe des Menschentums. Die dritte Stufe ist Umwandlung der Philosophie in Phänomenologie, mit dem wissenschaftlichen Bewußtsein von der Menschheit in ihrer Historizität und der Funktion, sie in eine Menschheit zu verwandeln, die sich bewußt von der Philosophie als Phänomenologie leiten läßt." HuaVI: 503).

the essential finitude and one-sidedness of human cognition in regard to the overall domain of truth. Phenomenology had not enclosed, but disclosed, the field of philosophy as an essentially open task that necessarily transcends human finitude – a task that can only be fulfilled in the intergenerational process of co-operation and critique. I will return to this issue in the last part of this work; for now, suffice it to say that instead of arriving at a Hegelian-Heideggerian doctrine on the end of history or philosophy, Husserl claimed to have uncovered the fundamental openness and inexhaustibility of the scientific enterprise.

What, then, was established through the birth of philosophy? Husserl was well aware of the fact that the Greeks did not themselves invent most of the intellectual activities and practices – such as mathematics, astronomy and medicine – that have been passed on to us under the title "European sciences". Despite his emphasis on Plato's achievements, Husserl followed the idea already proposed by Nietzsche in one of his unpublished works that nothing is "more foolish than to swear by the fact that the Greeks had an autochthonous culture, rather, they absorbed all the culture flourishing among other nations, and they advanced so far just because they understood how to hurl the spear further from the very spot where another nation had let it rest"[37]. The Greeks were, above all, mediators of other cultures who understood the creative strength of traditionality – a strength issuing not from authority but from the essential multiformity evident in its contradictions and conflicts.[38] Therefore, as Husserl emphasized, the "primal establishment" of philosophy was not to be conceived in terms of the simple act (or the series of acts) of instituting meaning, which then allows the succeeding accumulation of sense. Instead, the inception

[37] "Nichts ist thörichter als den Griechen eine autochthone Bildung nachzusagen, sie haben vielmehr alle bei anderen Völkern lebende Bildung in sich eingesogen, sie kamen gerade deshalb so weit, weil sie es verstanden den Speer von dort weiter zu schleudern, wo ihn ein anderes Volk liegen ließ." Nietzsche, KSA 1.806.

[38] As Geoffrey Lloyd has pointed out, what separates the Greek scientific writings from the extant remains of Egyptian and Babylonian medicine, mathematics and astronomy is the recurring gesture of deliberate alienation. Whereas the latter "can be combined in vain for a single example of a text where an individual author explicitly distances himself from, and criticizes, the received tradition in order to claim originality for himself," Lloyd writes, "our Greek sources repeatedly do that." Lloyd 1995: 57. As Rémi Brague has convincingly argued in his *Eccentric Culture* (2002), we ought to attribute this "preservative" relation to the past not to Greeks, but to the "Roman attitude […] as that of one who is conscious of a call to renew the ancient" (2002: 35).

of philosophy involved an inherent element of negativity which constituted its uniqueness in regard to all pre-philosophical accomplishments. Philosophy, wrote Husserl in an appendix to *Erste Philosophie*, "*emerges without a tradition in order to establish a tradition*."[39] Its goal-positing (*Zielsetzung*) is something completely new –

> [...] Philosophy wants to be "science", universal science of the universe; in all of its different systematic forms, it wants to be general according to the absolutely valid truth which binds all of those who are capable of intuitive evidence.[40]

Thus the unique character of philosophy, argued Husserl, could not be explained in terms of substantial content, doctrine, or even a particular technique. Instead, philosophy unfolded through a particular critical relation towards established tradition for the sake of a new principle of justification that binds all rational subjects in a similar manner. Instead of taking its point of departure from the reproduction, imitation, or refutation of tradition, philosophy turned its gaze to the very idea of traditionality as such: Why is it so that culture, as it emerges through the communal activity of individuals, assembles itself into the form of a unified tradition? Why is it so that despite the (seemingly) equal capabilities of individual human beings, we fail to understand each other due to the specific character of our own tradition? In other words, philosophy denoted the birth of the first praxis not to take its own traditionality as a given but as a question to be asked. It aimed to question existing traditions on the basis of *universal reason*, which fostered the ideal of a *universal culture*.[41]

However, can this form of culture, really, be described in terms of "universalism"? Although the notion of "universalism" is of theological origin – it was first used in the late sixteenth century to denote the Protestant (especially Lutheran) doctrine of universal salvation – we are perhaps better acquainted with the secular version characteristic of the modern

[39] *"Traditionlos tritt sie auf, eine Tradition erst zu schcaffen."* HuaVIII: 320.
[40] Philosophie will "Wissenschaft", universale Wissenschaft vom Weltall sein; sie will, in allen ihren so verschiedenen Systementwürfen, dem Allgemeinen nach schlechthin gültige Wahrheit sein (bzw. ein geordnetes und verknüpftes System einheitlich verknüpfter Wahrheiten), die jeden Einsichtigen bindet, die jeder als die eine und selbe für jedermann gultige, ihn bindende Wahrheit anerkennen muß HuaVIII: 320.
[41] See e.g. Waldenfels 1998; Holenstein 1998.

doctrine of legal-political universalism.[42] In contemporary philosophical debate, it has become somewhat common to employ this term to denote the stance according to which all human beings are basically bound by a set of commonly shared norms, principles or rights. There are a number of historical reasons for this. Through the early modern theories of natural law, universalism gradually became linked to the idea of the unconditional value of the individual, which served as the theoretical foundation for the first universal declarations of human rights. As we saw in connection to Hobbes and Locke (Ch. 1.1), for the philosophers of early modernity, human nature was associated, first and foremost, with the universal and unchanging features of the human character – an idea that we discover in its political form, for instance, in Pierre Charron's *De la sagesse* (1601): "The sign of a natural law must be the universal respect in which it is held, for if there was anything that nature had truly commanded us to do, we would undoubtedly obey it universally: not only would every nation respect it, but every individual"[43]. In this regard, universalism came to denote a substantial position that argued for the unconditional sharedness of certain principles, norms and rights. Through attempts to develop a political and societal model that would be in line with this doctrine, universalism became synonymous with the political doctrine of establishing a *cosmopolitan state* based on the all-embracing principles of natural law. From Hugo Grotius's "great society of states" to Kant's vision of "cosmopolitan community", the seventeenth and eighteenth century produced a wide variety of blueprints for a global superstate – a universal community of men.[44]

[42] The doctrine of "universality" stems from the Latin *universalis*, 'of all' or 'belonging to all', and its respective noun *universus*, 'all together, whole, entire', we are perhaps more familiar with it through the modern doctrine of legal-political universalism. Both of these concepts are renditions of the Greek word *katholikon* and its root *to katholou*, 'in general', 'on the whole' – a definition that Aristotle, for instance, uses to describe the generality of our ideas and concepts (the concept of "horse" is *general* insofar as it applies to *all* horses). The idea of a universal, *Catholic* church (Gr. *hē katholikē ekklesia*) comes up in the second century AD, and was primarily used to designate the ecclesial unity of Christian believers and their commitment to the Bishop of Rome.

43 "L'enseigne et la marque d'une loy naturelle est l'université d'approbation; car ce que nature nous auroit veritablement ordonné, nous l'ensuyvrons sans doute dün commun consentement, et non seulement toute nation, mais tout homme particulier." Charron 1836: 324

[44] However, this stance had its opponents. As the German historian Friedrich Meinecke argued, it was namely the "universalism of the Enlightenment [that] nurtured the particularism of modern nation-states" (Meinecke 1924: 405). With the rise of the modern nation-states during the nineteenth century, universalism became gradually the synonym

However, according to Husserl, universalism in Greek philosophy differed from our modern understanding of the term. First of all, in relation to its modern counterpart, Greek idea of universalism was distinguished by its essentially *formal character*. Instead of commonly shared principles and norms, Greek universalism took its point of departure from the non-substantial idea of a shared task open to all to participate in. Philosophy, argued Husserl, took its point of departure from the inalienable responsibility of the individual participant, and, as such, it brought within itself a novel idea of communal co-operation based on the inextricable equality of its participants. Secondly, instead of the legitimization of a particular societal form or sovereign power – as was the case in early modern theories of political universalism – Husserl located the primal motive of Greek universalism in the most unpractical attitude of all: "wonder" (Gr. *thaumazein*). The primal mode of existence developed by the philosophical enterprise was that of a "disinterested spectator" (*unbeteiligter Zuschauer*)[45] renouncing all practical motives. Thirdly, rather than in a legal-political doctrine, Husserl attempted to locate the basic foundations of universalism in the structure of reason itself – an aspiration that was of course also present in the philosophers of modernity (e.g. Descartes[46]). Beginning with Heraclitus, there emerged a novel insistence on acknowledging the culturally and historically specific character of our experience, i.e., a specificity that was to be understood against the background of a universally shared idea of reason. As Husserl emphasized, although the Greeks did not formulate this idea in regard to the idea of *transcendental* subjectivity or correlation – e.g., the categories described by Aristotle were considered qualities of being, not of consciousness – they created a novel division in the structure of reason which attempted to acknowledge both the "national-traditional" and "pure" aspects of cognition (cf. Ch. 3.2).

What such notions as "attitude" and "disinterested spectator" reveal in this connection is that Husserl's reading of the Greek inception was

of cosmopolitan idea of civilization, and consequently – at least in the German context – the antonym of culture that was characterized by "living" and productive expressivity. "As a foundation of life", wrote Alfred Rosenberg, "universalism is as shoreless as individualism; the victory of either world-view is destined to lead to chaos." (Rosenberg 1930: 321)

[45] HuaVI: 331.

[46] *In Discourse on Method* (originally published in 1637), for instance, Descartes calls reason the "universal instrument" (Descartes 2003: 38).

intimately bound up with his own phenomenological vocabulary.[47] Thus, in order to understand Husserl's account, the historical transformation that took place in the 6th and 5th centuries BC, needs to be framed in phenomenological-experiential terms, first of all, with reference to the birth of a novel attitude Husserl calls "theoretical". Husserl had been working with this concept since the first and second volume of *Ideas*; however, what characterized his later interpretations was a novel sensitivity to the communal and historical conditions of this attitude.[48] First of all, instead of defining itself against other types of individual attitudes (e.g. the personalistic, the natural), Husserl began to discuss the theoretical attitude in contrast to two historically preceding practices and their peculiar "attitudes": the religious-mythical and the mathematical (or geometrical).[49] Instead of transcending or annulling them, the theoretical attitude was to be understood as something which *ascends* from these attitudes – something which articulates itself on the basis of these stances.

Secondly, instead of merely being an individual conversion, the emergence of the theoretical attitude was closely linked to a series of geo-socio-historical transformations which provided some of the necessary conditions for the development of the theoretical attitude. In this regard, "the breakthrough of science was motivated by the pre-philosophical lifeworld"[50] – not only did philosophy lead to a series of cultural revolutions, but it was itself based on a series of territorial, communal and historical transformations which radically altered the sense of home and the familiar for the pre-philosophical Greek communities. To put it more succinctly, philosophy was this *generative transformation*, articulated in the form of a novel idea about traditionality and homeliness, of cultural objectivity and personality of a higher order. Thus from the perspective of relative lifeworlds, philosophy was as much an intellectual activity as it was, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, a *geo-philosophy* – a form of thinking which necessarily entailed a specific "deterritorialization [...] the movement from territory to earth".[51] For this reason, they insist, the birth

[47] On this point, see especially Held 1989b.
[48] On the idea of "*theoretical attitude*" (theoretische Einstellung), see HuaIV: 2–17; HuaIX: 220; HuaXV: 532–534. On the emergence of the theoretical attitude in Greeks, see HuaVI: 308–310, 326–328; HuaXXVII: 78–86, 186ff.; HuaXXIX: 41, 396ff.
[49] On the relation between myth and theory in Husserl, see esp. Hart 1989.
[50] HuaXXIX: 347.
[51] Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 86.

of philosophy "appears in Greece as a result of contingency rather than necessity, as a result of an ambience or milieu rather than origin"[52] – it is not self-establishing, it is established.[53]

Husserl would have denied, of course, that the idea of universal philosophy carried a necessary relationship to its historical-empirical origin. Understood in its ideal sense – as a transcendental form of meaning-creation – philosophy was as Greek as phenomenology was Freiburgian. Instead of simply reducing philosophy back to its unfolding in the history of the Greek world, Husserl aimed to understand the cultural and geo-historical conditions of this transformation from the perspective of transcendental description, i.e., from the categories of home and alien, familiar and strange, particular and general etc. What happened on the Balkan peninsula between years 600 and 400 BC was of course an empirical development that can only be evoked through literary documents or archeological studies – however, it is quite possible to view this period from the perspective of the teleological development of spirit, communality and historicity and the novel forms of meaning-institution embedded in them. From this perspective, the birth of philosophy appeared not as an absolute origin independent of its historical background but as the *continuation* or *transformation* of something:

> Naturally the outbreak of the theoretical attitude, like everything that develops historically, has its factual motivation in the concrete framework of historical occurrence. In this respect one must clarify, then, how *thaumazein* (wonder) could arise and become habitual, at first in individuals, out of the manner and the life-horizon of Greek human-ity in the seventh century, with its contact with the great and already highly cultivated nations of its surrounding world.[54]

[52] Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 96.

[53] In this regard, I believe that my interpretation supplements the reading of Klaus Held (e.g. 1998a, 1998b, 2002), who mostly discusses Husserl's reading from the viewpoint of the theoretical attitude and the novel vocabulary of reason. We should acknowledge that many of the most important materials concerning the generative background of Greek philosophy – and the cultural transformations incepted by it – were published only in 1992 with the volume 29 of Husserliana.

[54] "Natürlich hat der Einbruch der theoretischen Einstellung, wie alles historisch Gewordene, seine faktische Motivation im konkreten Zusammenhang geschichtlichen Geschehens. Es gilt also in dieser Hinsicht, aufzuklären, wie aus der Art und dem Lebenshorizont des griechischen Menschentums im 7. Jahrhundert in seinem Verkehr mit den großen und schon hochkultivierten Nationen ihrer Umwelt jenes thaumazein sich einstellen und zunächst in Einzelnen habituell werden konnte." HuaVI: 331–332.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the conditions for this transformation from the perspective of two ideas: territoriality and reason. It is my argument that in order to comprehend the overall cultural transformation triggered by the communal activity of *philosophia*, this activity needs to be viewed in regard to its generative and historical conditions. These conditions reveal the significant role of the *geo-historical transformations* that Husserl considered necessary (though not solely sufficient) for the emergence of the theoretical attitude.

3.2. On the Generative Origins of Theory: Territoriality and Reason

Greek philosophy, besides being the origin of a Europe currently in demise, was itself the product of a crisis. Those forms of thinking we call philosophical – that began to emerge in the 6th century BC forwards – emerged against the backdrop of a series of political, societal and religious transformations that substantially changed the cultural landscape of the Greek city-states. Rapid economic development and the particular increase of maritime trade in the Aegean Sea and Northern Africa (Cyrenaica, Egypt) had led to growing tensions between the old aristocratic elites and the new class of wealthy merchants. The so-called constitutional reform of Solon in the early 6th century was an attempt to resolve these tensions – as well as to meet the demands of the ever more conscious peasantry – and through a set of transformations known as the democratic reforms, the growing divisions in Greek society were gradually given an institutionalized form. Moreover, by also conceding Athenian citizenship also to non-indigenous people (above all, traders), the Solon reforms made Athens the centre of commercial and cultural exchange.[55]

The cultural effects of this transformation varied widely. Close interaction between different city-states itself created new sensitivity toward different traditions and their beliefs and practices. As Deleuze and Guat-

[55] See e.g. Andrews 1967: 197ff. Husserl, too, confirmed the "preparatory" character of trade-relations for the novel "spiritual stance" (*Geisteserhaltung*) – although he did not concretely describe these relations in detail, see HuaXXIX: 42.

tari argue, the city-states of Ancient Greece, especially Athens, seemed to be "at once near enough to and far enough away from the archaic eastern empires to be able to benefit from them without following their model"[56] – the Greeks were attracted to the foreign element without caving in to its magnetism. This appreciation of the foreign was evident, for instance, in the field of Greek historiography, which seemed to acknowledge a wide variety of traditions regardless of their familiarity. As the case of Herodotus' *Histories* shows us, in its 6th and 5th century BC usage, the Greek word *historia* was indifferent to the division between home and alien: it encompassed accounts both from domestic and from foreign traditions.[57] Thus, Greek historiography, as it unfolded as the mediation between home and alien, relied on a specific self-distanciation from the absolute primacy of one's own tradition. "I write what seems to me to be true", says Hecataeus of Miletus in the first paragraph of his *Genealogies* (composed in the late 6th century), "for the stories of the Greeks are manifold and seem to me absurd."[58] Hecataeus' inclination was not, however, simply to ridicule the different myths, but to clarify their interconnections and analogical features. By discussing the chronological order of different tales, he was one of the first to develop a systematic account of mythologies.[59]

From early on, this mediation between domestic and foreign was linked to the notion of theory. During the early Classical era – i.e., before the emergence of philosophy – the Greek concept of *theōria* stood primarily for the specific civic practice of *travelogue*. In the practice of *theōria*, a particular citizen traveled abroad in order to give an account of events and occurrences in a foreign *polis* that had usually been hitherto unknown. As Andrea Nightingale has shown, these journeys were usually religious in character – varying from meetings with oracles to participation in religious festivals – and constituted official "eyewitness reports".[60]

[56] Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 87

[57] As Waldenfels correctly points out, the "alien other" (Gr. *allotrios*; Lat. *alienum*) or the "stranger" (Gr. *xenon*) were not central categories of Greek philosophical thought, i.e., they were not conceived as philosophical problems, but as categories belonging to the facticity of human existence. See Waldenfels 1997: 16–18. Cf. Held 1989b: 23; 2002: 90–91.

[58] Hecataeus F 1 in Jacoby 1923.

[59] See e.g. Graf 1993: 125.

[60] Nightingale 2004: 3. Cf. Gadamer 1975: 117ff; Held 1989b: 23ff; 2002: 89.

First of all, it was characteristic of the idea of "theoretical insight" that it emphasized the importance of personal evidence over mere hearsay: *theoros* ("the spectator") was the one who had actually *witnessed* the events. Secondly, the peculiarly "theoretical" mode of vision denoted a rather broad notion of "seeing" that excluded the mere visual connotations of this notion. As Nightingale emphasizes, theory denotes a kind of "sacralized vision" that, in the case of religious festivities, was also sensitive to the "hidden" cultural and social dimensions of the practices in question.[61] In this regard, theory acknowledged rather than dismissed the differences in understanding characteristically revealed by unfamiliar experiences. Thirdly, on the basis of the aforementioned insights, what the idea of the theoretical narrative seemed to imply was a kind of universal translatability of particular cultural phenomena: the idea that although sacred events are restricted to a number of participants, they can also be made understandable for the excluded. This linked the notion of theory to a specific educational function which aimed to cultivate sensitivity toward particular traditions. (It is perhaps no coincidence that the first instantiation of philosophical *theōria* – Plato's allegory of the cave in the books V–VII of *The Republic* – is in the form of a journey.)

This intimate relationship between theory and the mediation between "home" and "alien" was also acknowledged by Husserl. In one of his later manuscripts, "Teleology in the History of Philosophy" (*Teleologie in der Philosophiegeschichte*), Husserl emphasized the centrality of the critique of mythology to the emergence of the theoretical attitude. "The Greeks were keen to despise the barbarians", Husserl wrote, "the alien mythologies that signified such an important dimension of the practical environment in the alien as well as in the own people, and [they] considered them even as barbaric, stupid, or profoundly wrong."[62] However, even the mockery and ridicule that the Greeks leveled at foreign mythologies failed to remove the Greeks fascination for their similarities and analogous ways of seeing the world, "the same sun, the same moon, the same earth, the same

[61] Nightingale 2004: 35–37.

[62] "Der Grieche mag die Barbaren verachten, die ihm fremden Mythologien, die als Mythologien in der Fremde wie in dem eigenen Volk eine so grosse Schichte der praktischen Umwelt bezeichnen, mögen ihm zunächst eben als barbarisch, als dumm, als grundverkehrt gelten". (HuaXXIX: 387). According to a popular etymological consideration, the Greek word '*barbaroi*' was derived from the seemingly incomprehensible speech of alien people (e.g. the Persians). See e.g. Waldenfels 1997: 22.

sea etc."[63] Alongside the "territorial myths" characteristic of particular homeworlds – for instance, the tales of Philomela and Oedipus among the Greeks – there emerged a novel sensitivity towards "universal myths" that referred to *universally shared* features of the lifeworld such as the earth, the sky and the heavenly bodies.[64] What Husserl confirmed here was basically the point that Aristotle advanced in the first book of *Metaphysics* that despite their differing perspectives and conceptual schemes, the early "philosophers of nature" – the Milesians, Eleatics, and Pythagoreans – had actually "spoken about the same matters".[65] They had addressed the same phenomena in a way that could be understood and critically examined by others.

In another manuscript, entitled "Different Forms of Historicity" (*Verschiedene Formen der Historizität*), Husserl delineated this process with the notion of *demythologization* (*Entmythisierung*).[66] Through the acknowledgment of the analogous character of universal mythical apperceptions, the mediation between individual homeworlds led to a series of "identity-syntheses" that were able to endow the descriptions of the natural world with a specific relativity in regard to their common foundation: the sun could be called *Helios*, *Ra*, or even a "chariot drawn by fire-darting steeds" (as in Pindar's *Olympian Odes*), but all of these descriptions referred to the same object. Through the "sublation" of national representations, the critique of mythology was able to foster what Husserl called the idea of "the first objective world" (*die erste objektive Welt*) – a world divested of the primacy of a particular homeworld.[67] In his manuscripts from early of 1930s, Husserl had already anticipated this idea by referring to the constitution of the somewhat clumsy notion of "the" world (*"die" Welt*) on the basis of the encounter of homeworld and alienworld.[68] Now, although the new idea of an "objective world" was only realized in terms of a "vague notion" – the "all-communal ground for all identifications" – it presented a challenge for the "naïve-natural historicity of human existence", that is,

[63] Hua XXIX: 387.
[64] HuaXXIX: 43–44.
[65] Aristotle, *Met*. I.5, 987a10–11.
[66] HuaXXIX: 41–46. See also HuaVI: 340; HuaXXVII: 189, 194ff.
[67] HuaXXIX: 45.
[68] HuaXV: 214–18. Husserl also speaks of the first objective "world-level" (*Weltstufe*), see HuaXV: 205.

to the unquestioned naturalness of familiarity and strangeness.[69] Through the encounter of particular traditions, no single tradition could acquire for itself the status of being an absolute foundation – the lifeworld could no longer be identified with a particular homeworld and its conceptuality. Instead, the praxis of theory had created a new craving for concepts able to acknowledge both our adhesion to a particular tradition as well as the "commonality" of the underlying world.

This transition, although it did not yet entail the emergence of philosophical reason, had created a need for such concepts that could acknowledge this essential embeddedness in a particular lifeworld. If, indeed, the lifeworld could appear as both universally shared and culturally unique, then this division could not be understood solely on the basis of the worldly objects themselves. Instead, it was to be comprehended from the perspective of the apprehending "mind". Alongside what Husserl called the idea of a "national-traditional reason" there emerged a new craving for the idea of "pure reason [...] through which the pure and absolutely objective world is first disclosed".[70] In other words, what the praxis of theory had introduced was a novel division or "split" in the concept of reason itself – a split whose genuine character was to become the core question of the philosophical enterprise.

Because Husserl's own analysis seems only to operate on the level of conceptual distinctions, we might benefit from supplementary insights that flesh out the historical development in the notion of rationality. In historical analysis, the new sensitivity towards the manifold ways of experiencing the world was reflected, above all, in a new conceptual framework which aimed to differentiate between simple and complex forms of perception. As Bruno Snell argued in his classic work *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* (1975), the Homeric texts did not yet operate with the distinction between immediate and mediate world-disclosure, that is, between purely sensuous perception and discursive apperception.[71] For the thinkers of the pre-Classical period, every form of world-disclosure was fundamentally a

[69] HuaXXIX: 45.
[70] "Oder sie weckte die Vermöglichkeit der Verwandlung der national-traditionalen "Vernunft" (Vernunft in der Endlichkeit, in der Relativität) in die "reine" Vernunft, die Ratio des irrelativ Unbedingten, durch die erst die reine und absolut objektive Welt entdeckt wird, oder die Objekte als Objekte an sich für uns Menschen da sind." HuaXXIX: 347.
[71] Snell 1975: 17ff.

simple and immediate bodily process which did not contain the possibility of error. Indeed, this was also a notion that Aristotle ascribed to Empedocles in *De anima*.[72] Thus the archaic view of perception was not able to articulate the idea that people would experience the world differently because of their particular cultural contexts. Secondly, what Snell also emphasizes is the idea that in texts from the Homeric period we do not really find any terms referring to a common mind, soul or consciousness universally shared by all human beings. The notions that these authors use to describe the peculiar intellectual features of man – *thymos*, *nous*, *sōma*, *psychē* – were all considered organic functions or bodily forces that take their peculiar effect on the human being, for instance, in the case of *psychē*, by developing the urge for self-preservation. These forces, however, did not embody any kind of substantial mode of existence apart from their peculiar assignment; rather, they were considered in purely functional terms. Instead, the idea of the soul as a form of substance, *ousia*, only emerged through Plato and Aristotle.[73]

According to Snell, Heraclitus was the first to articulate a concept of the "soul" (*psychē*) which substantially differed from the mere functional, bodily principle of an individual.[74] At the very heart of this notion, Heraclitus placed the faculty of *logos* – a notion which in its pre-philosophical sense denoted a vast variety of ideas from "speech" to "computation", "relation" and "explanation". However, Heraclitus was the first to articulate the notion of *logos* in connection to an idea of discursive reason that did not merely reflect or articulate given meanings or meaning-structures but constantly *discloses* being. Without this faculty of reason "in accordance with all things come to pass"[75], the whole idea of reality as a meaningful whole would be inconceivable: everything that appears *as something that makes sense* does so because it is structured as comprehensible by some agent who lets things to appear. This idea is also reflected in the pre-philosophical connotations of the verb *legein*, which was primarily used in the sense of agricultural gathering and preserving: as in the case of harvesting a crop, and also in the rational structuring of the world, a functioning

[72] Aristotle, *De an.* III, 3. 427b12-15
[73] Plato, *Phaedo* 92d; Aristotle on psychē *as a "secondary substance" (deutere ousia), see De an. II, 1. 412a19–22.*
[74] Snell 1975: 25ff.
[75] Diels & Kranz 1951 (hereafter DK), 22 B1

agent must be presupposed in order for meaningfulness to come about.

Now, as Heraclitus adds in another fragment, although *logos* is common to all men, "the many (*hoi polloi*) live as if they had a *private understanding*"[76]. Even though our ability to comprehend the reality around us is fundamentally similar, in our disputes and varying interpretations we often fail to recognize this common ground. Indeed, different myths, languages and customs seem to become our "second nature", in the sense that they often hinder us from living according to our joint "first nature", which is common to all human beings. Furthermore, as Heraclitus puts it in another fragment, the correlate of this nature is nothing less than the common world as such: "The waking have one common world (*kosmos*), but the sleeping turn aside each into a world of his own".[77] Thus, the shared world has an ontological priority over the cultural-generative because it corresponds with the true, "waking" character of human life.

It is perhaps no coincidence that Husserl so keenly adopted the metaphors of "the dawn" (*Morgenrot*) and "awakening" (*Erwachen*) to describe the peculiar character of the Greek inception and its meaning for the idea of Europe.[78] Through the novel idea of universal reason, the Greek beginning denoted "a new stage in humanity (*Menschlichkeit*) and its rationality"[79] – a new idea of universality resulting in the emergence of the *theoretical-scientific attitude*.

We should avoid, however, presenting a too idealized picture of Greek anthropology. At least at the level of individual psychology, there were numerous attempts to restrict the universality of intellectual abilities – attempts that were based on highly questionable arguments and used for dubious political motives. In the writings of Aristotle, for one, barbarians, slaves, women and children were all presented as lacking some significant intellectual faculty or function in order to argue, for instance, for the naturalness of slavery or the exclusion of women from the political sphere.[80] However, contrary to Hannah Arendt's description of the representation of the slaves of Greek city-states as beings without *logos*, these

[76] DK 22 B2.
[77] DK 22 B89.
[78] HuaVI: 273. See also HuaVI: 145–146. This connection between Heraclitus and phenomenology has been put forward especially by Hart (1989: 154–158) and Held (2002: 84ff.).
[79] HuaVI: 338.
[80] On the exclusion of women and slaves, see *Pol*. I.13 1260a11–13

ethnocentric and misogynistic arguments never really touched the core of the Greek rationality.[81] As Aristotle says, those who wish to exclude slaves from the common *logos* are simply wrong – for without *logos*, there would be no way of differentiating human beings from mere brutes.[82] As Aristotle emphasized on several occasions, *logos* should not be understood as a mere common attribute (*koinon*) of human beings; rather, it is their defining characteristic (*idion*).[83]

However, as Husserl argued elsewhere, the transition from the old mythological framework to philosophical co-operation was not as straightforward as it first appears. The critique of traditional mythology (or cosmology) that began during the 6th and 5th centuries BC did not directly lead to the emergence of the theoretical enterprise. Rather, it was mediated by a peculiar negative backlash that was manifested in the skeptical practice of the sophists.[84] As Richard Bett has argued, although the view of the sophists as diehard advocates of cultural relativism is perhaps an exaggeration – an exaggeration stemming from Protagoras being viewed the leading exponent of the movement[85] – it is, nevertheless, clear that the advancement of scientific practice in the works of Plato and Aristotle emerged in clear opposition not simply to traditional mythology but to the unquestioned authority of "common beliefs" (*doxai*) in the life of Greek society. This authority was supported by the crucial role that speech played in the life of the Greek *polis*: besides being the central medium of Greek politics (reflected in the democratic principles of "free speech", *parrhēsia* and *isēgoria*), speech also governed the functioning of the legal system and the new "ethical" practices of teaching virtue and excellence.[86] Although ridiculing particular traditions and their ambiguities was a central part of the sophists' practice, they did not fail to recognize the very ambiguity that is inherent in linguistic communication as such. On the contrary, sophism took advantage of this ambiguity for its own practical gain, for in-

[81] See Arendt 1958: 27.
[82] Arendt's description is probably based on Pol. I 5 1254b20 in which Aristotle refuses to use the verb *ehkein* ("to *possess*") to describe the relation between *logos* and the slaves. However, as 1260b5 shows, it is completely misplaced to describe slaves as beings without logos (*aneu logou)*.
[83] *Pol.* I, 2. 1053a 10; E. N. I, 13. 1102a30. See also Plato, *Soph.* 264a
[84] Husserl on the significance of sophism, see HuaXXIX: 281, 388, 421. Cf. HuaVIII: 3ff; HuaXXV: 126ff.
[85] Bett 1989.
[86] Freeman 1996: 147ff.

stance, for political or juridical persuasion. Thus, for the genuinely philosophical attitude, the dimension of speech was not enough; it needed to be based upon an intellectual position which *distanced itself* from the practical interests of societal life and was not bound to the ambiguities and relativities of the natural language. In this way, Husserl claimed, sophism opened up a central path for understanding the relationship between being and consciousness.[87]

In Husserl's account, this distanciation emerged in the intellectual attitude of "wonder" (*thaumazein*), which represented the first genuinely non-practical attitude towards one's particular homeworld.[88] In this respect, Husserl particularly aligned himself with Plato and Aristotle in their delineations of wonder as the origin (*arkhē*)[89] of philosophy, "for the sake of which"[90] the first philosophers began their quest. Husserl's understanding of the emergence of wonder was in terms of a passive occurrence within experience, an involuntary change of attitude that encouraged a sense of "curiosity" (*Neugier*), which could break free from all practical life-interests.[91] Despite its involuntary character, Husserl understood wonder as an essentially "productive" or "creative" stance; rather than being a feeling of mere bewilderment, wonder seems to direct attention to those features that make something what it is. In wonder, one is not interested in the advantageous aspects of a particular object; rather, one seems to be enthralled by the things themselves ("Why is the sky blue?", "What is this thing we call time?"). This is why Husserl also called wonder the "original theory", for it naturally guides one's interest towards the essential reasons, grounds and fundamental elements of the appearing reality. As Husserl put it in one of his unpublished lectures:

[87] Cf. the manuscript F I 40/18b: "Die ungeheure historische Bedeutung dieses [sophistische] Skeptizismus liegt darin, dass zuerst in ihm Blickwendungen in jene von uns gesuchte neue Dimension, sagen wir die vernunftkritische, eine wesentliche Rolle spielen, dass er es zuerst war, der, wenn auch in sehr unvollkommener Form, die auf alle Erkenntnis und Wissenschaft wesentlich bezogenen Schwierigkeiten des Verhältnisses von Sein und Bewusstsein fühlbar machte."

[88] HuaVI: 328–329. See also references to manuscripts in HuaXXIX:

[89] *"mala gar philosophou touto to pathos, to thaumazein: ou gar allē arkhē philosophias ē hautē",* Plato, *Theaetetus,* 155d.

[90] *"dia gar to thaumazein hoi anthrōpoi kai nun kai to prōton ērxanto philosophein, ex arkhēs men ta prokheira tōn atopōn thaumasantes"* (Aristot. *Met*. I.982b11-14).

[91] On two levels of theory, see HuaVI: 332. On *thaumazein* as the "pre-form" (*Vorgestalt*) of theoretical attitude, see HuaXXIX: 67.

> Certainly, we must differentiate between two levels of inspection: the wisdom, or to put it more accurately, the education (*Bildung*) that one acquires, for instance, by travelling with one's eyes open – by looking, observing, and comparing – and the higher level of knowledge that one acquires through a thinking directed towards comprehension and explication. At the forefront of the history of philosophy and the history of humane science there stands Thales who philosophizes in a completely new sense (instead of Solon who "philosophizes" in the mere Herodotian sense of the word).[92]

Taken from an experiential point of view, the emergence of the genuinely *theoretical-scientific attitude* characteristic of the philosophical enterprise signified, above all, a kind of entrenchment of wonder. Following his earlier characterizations of the phenomenological method, Husserl defined the theoretical observer as a "distinterested spectator" (*unbeteiligten Zuschauer*)[93] – i.e., as someone who makes a virtue of detachment from the world of practical activity. Thus, based on the active "*epoche* of all natural praxis"[94] – i.e., the "bracketing" of all considerations of usefulness and the cultural and mythical apperceptions of things – this theoretical attitude signified nothing less than the *habituation* of universal curiosity. Instead of merely dissecting the different analogies used by particular mythological constellations, this attitude unfolded as an insistence to "leave behind all naïve traditional commitments"[95], that is, to do away with the inherited traditionality characteristic of pre-philosophical generativity.

To explain the character of this habituation, Husserl called forth one of the central notions of his ethical theory – "vocation" (*Beruf*) – and insisted that the formation of the theoretical attitude be understood in terms of vocational life (*Berufsleben*).[96] This insistence, which already appears in

[92] "Doch müssen wir hier zwei Stufen sichtlich unterscheiden: Diejenige Weisheit oder, wie wir besser sagen, die Bildung, die sich zum Beispiel der mit offenen Sinnen Reisende und immerfort Schauende, Betrachtende, Vergleichende erwirbt, und die höhere Erkenntnisstufe, die das auf Begreifen und Erklären gerichtete Denken gewinnt. Nicht jener im Sinne der herodotischen Rede „philosophierende" Solon, sondern der in einem neuen Sinn philosophierende Thales steht an der Spitze der Geschichte der Philosophie und der Geschichte der menschlichen Wissenschaft" Husserl, F I 40/13b

[93] HuaVI: 328, 341. Cf. HuaVIII: 98.

[94] HuaVI: 328.

[95] HuaXXIX: 389.

[96] HuaVI: 261ff. In his ethical writings of the early 1920s, Husserl had understood the emergence of vocation as a specific principle of self-regulation – one, which seeks to govern the life of a person according to certain values, goods or ends (e.g. HuaXXVII: 28ff.). In this respect, the idea of vocational life was to be distinguished from the mere blind

Husserl's earliest texts on Greek philosophy, can be explained on two points. Firstly, by giving the notion of vocation a certain involuntary connotation by putting the idea of a "calling" (*Ruf*) at the heart of this concept, Husserl wanted to accentuate the almost fatalistic aspect of philosophical life, which is analogous to religious conversion. As Gadamer put it in *Wahrheit und Methode*: "*Theoria* is a true participation, not something active but something passive (*pathos*), namely being totally involved in and carried away by what one sees."[97] In a remark in a late manuscript, Husserl called this attraction the "demonism"[98] of the philosophical vocation: philosophy, in its most fundamental experiential sense, is not something one chooses but something to which one is called. Secondly, it seems that by invoking the notion of vocation, Husserl wanted to indicate the fundamentally "reflexive" aspect of the theoretical attitude. Instead of being the result of mere striving towards the creation of objectivity, Husserl understood the emergence of the theoretical attitude in terms of a reflexive stance *which is directed towards the pre-given horizon of one's own homeworld*, its presuppositions and habitualities. Thus, although theory emerged as an insistence on leaving behind all traditional commitments, it was accompanied by the conviction that this departure was not something that can be performed once and for all; instead, it can only be attained through a perpetual critique of the values and validities of one's own tradition.

What this consideration reveals is that by framing the notion of the theoretical attitude in terms of vocation, Husserl wanted to undermine nothing less than the essentially *practical* underpinning of

following of needs: by submitting oneself to more or less enduring principles, the human being was able to overcome the mere instinctual life of the animal guided by the satisfaction of needs, to achieve a minimum definition of "freedom" against the mere compulsory behavior. In this context, Husserl's purpose was of course to distinguish between different types of vocational life in order to arrive at a genuinely ethical mode of self-regulation, which he defined in terms of autonomy and renewal (see the part 4 of this work).

[97] Gadamer 1975: 118. "Thus theory is not in the first instance a behavior whereby we control an object or put it at our disposal by explaining it. It has to do with a good of another kind." (Gadamer 1998: 31–32)

[98] "Is vocation an empty word? Has any philosopher (in the original sense that can be understood on the basis of great philosophers) ever become a "genuine" philosopher without the demonism of having received such a vocation?" ("Ist Berufung ein leeres Wort? Ist je ein Philosoph – der urbildlichen Art, die an jedem grossen Philosophen in Evidenz nachzuverstehen ist, ein "echter" Philosoph je gewesen ohne die Dämonie der Berufenheit? HuaXXIX: 353. This point is also discussed by Luft 2004.

this attitude.[99] Although the theoretical attitude emerged through the reflection of everyday practical concerns, it did not entail a complete estrangement from the sphere of praxis, of doing and willing, of pursuit and volition.[100] Theory remained practical, first of all, in the sense that it necessarily emerged within the sphere of human action – as a peculiar renunciation of competing motives (for instance, a renunciation of what Aristotle called the life of pleasure and the political life).[101] Thus instead of creating a world of its own, the theoretical attitude signified a change of attitude towards one's own homeworld. Secondly, although the theoretical attitude signified a radical transition towards individual responsibility, it also ushered in a completely new kind of interpersonal co-operation. In order to understand the new idea of communal meaning-constitution implied in the theoretical attitude – the idea of philosophy as an interpersonal activity – we need to look at it also from the perspective of characteristically "theoretical" insights and truths. This transition will help us to characterize the novel modes of generativity and historicity that were constitutive to the emergence of philosophy.

[99] Here we find a clear analogy to Heidegger's earliest philosophical courses on the definition of philosophy where he discusses his own project of factical life in regard to the "dismantling" of the primacy of the theoretical: "This primacy of the theoretical must be broken, but not in order to proclaim the primacy of the practical, and not in order to introduce something that shows the problems from a new angle, but because the theoretical itself refers back to something pre-theoretical" ("Diese Vorherrschaft des Theoretischen muss gebrochen werden, zwar nicht in der Weise, dass man einen Primat des Praktischen proklamiert, und nicht deshalb, um nun mal etwas anderes zu bringen, was die Probleme von einer neue Seite zeigt, sondern weil das Theoretische selbst und als solcehs in ein Vortheoretische zurückweist." Heidegger, GA 56/57: 59).

[100] Historically speaking, the "unfortunate" separation of theory and practice – which I discussed in part 1.4 in connection to Husserl's account of crisis – may be led back to the Stoic distinction between *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*, which were renditions of Aristotle's classification of different types of vocational lives in *Politics (bios theōrētikos, bios apolaustikos, bios politikos)* – although Aristotle himself did not find the spheres of *theoria* and *praxis* as mutually exclusive. (E.N. 1139a18–30). As Nightingale points out, Plato, for one, did not "oppose the *contemplative* to the *practical* life; rather he differentiates between the *philosophical* and the *political* life" (2004: 133ff.). For him, "the philosopher is perfectly willing, and indeed supremely able to act, but unless he finds himself in a true city, he acts privately rather than politically" (2004: 133–134).

[101] On the threefold division between *bios apolaustikos, bios politikos* and *bios theorētikos,* see E.N. I.5. 1095bff.

3.3 Community of Theory and the Idea of Rational Culture

In terms of historical development, the verb *philosophein* and the adjective *philosophos* seem to have preceded the noun *philosophia* at least by a century. According to historical records, Pythagoras was the first to be generally known as a "lover of wisdom" (*philosophos*) – a definition that was analogically derived from other forms of personal devotion (such as a fondness for eating, *philotrophia*, or of wealth, *philoplousia*). It should be remembered that in the context of the 6th and 5th centuries BC, the scope of 'wisdom' (*sophia*) was not restricted to merely intellectual activity but comprised a wide variety of different types of "knowledge", including rhetoric and practical know-how. As Heraclitus confirmed, lovers of wisdom (*philosophous*) "must be acquainted with very many things indeed".[102] This rather broad interest in the objects and events of the world was also something that Herodotus affirmed when attributing Solon's love of wisdom to his theoretical interest (in the sense of travelling).[103] Although Pythagoras was able to assemble a group of pupils and successors, "philosophizing" in general primarily seemed to denote an individualistic attitude or character; although the paradigmatic form of the philosopher was perhaps more sharply realized in figures like Heraclitus, an "arrogant spirit", as Diogenes Laertius put it, who "had learned everything from himself".[104] Nevertheless, philosophizing seemed like a business of solitary individuals, and following the example of Heraclitus – the man who scorned law-making for the sake of dice-playing – it turned its back on the public affairs of the *polis*.[105]

The emergence of philosophy as a form of interpersonal activity seems, above all, to have been related to the development of democracy that began in mainland Attica at the turn of 6th and 5th centuries BC. Particularly in the context of the Athenian *polis*, "wisdom" was now more and more attached to specific political virtues, and the activity of philosophizing found a new platform in verbal debate and punchy argumentation that

[102] DK 22 B35
[103] Herodotus, Hist. 1.30–32.
[104] Diogenes Laertius, D.L. IX.1.5
[105] Diogenes Laertius, D.L. IX.1.3

sought to examine the matters at stake from several perspectives. As we saw in the previous chapter, the kind of free debate that characterized the political arena – the arena which knew only equals – was dominated, above all, by the rhetorical practices of the sophist movements. For them, the 'love of wisdom' seemed to entail the educational task of enriching the rhetorical skill of the individual in order to enhance his mastery of verbal debate. The substantive form *philosophia* appeared for the first time among the pupils of Socrates – particularly Xenophon, Isocrates and Plato – at the beginning of the 4th century. It emerged in close connection to the sophist idea of education (*paideia*). For philosophy, however, this task was primarily about cultivation. As Plato put it in the *Republic*, while the inexperienced youth tends to misuse verbal debate as a form of childish play or competition (*paidiē*), the experienced know how to take advantage of the apparent multitude of perspectives and use it as a means for the examination of truth.[106] This ideal provided the basic motive for the emergence of philosophical schools, including Plato's, whereby philosophy gradually established a social and institutional framework. Through a common framework, theory was able to distance itself from mere travelogue and acquire a stable base in the communal co-operation; instead of a mere intellectual attitude, philosophy became a common undertaking that could be manifested in specific cultural accomplishments that were able to be transmitted through tradition.

Although Husserl seldom referred to the historical genesis of philosophical schools, he was by no means indifferent to the institutionalized form of philosophy. While he emphasized the significance of the critique of mythology to the emergence of the theoretical attitude, it was only through the "Platonic" drive toward communalization that this attitude became entrenched in a permanent cultural form.[107] Through Plato, Hus-

[106] Plato, *Rep*., 539 b-c.

[107] HuaXXXV: 50–55. See also F I 40/34a where Husserl still excludes the theoretical motive from the teachings of Socrates: "Die wissenschaftliche Auswirkung der sokratischen Impulse vollzieht sich durch den größten Schüler des Sokrates, durch Platon (427–347 BC). Von ihrem Urheber war die Methode der Definition, nämlich der klärenden Sinnes- und Wesensanalyse von begrifflichen Vorstellungen, die das Verhalten der Menschen bedeutungsvoll bestimmen, nur so weit geübt worden, als es sein Interesse für eine Erneuerung des Lebens im Geiste eines wahrhaft praktisch-vernünftigen Lebens es forderte. Ein Theoretiker war Sokrates nicht." On the analogical mode of investigation characterizing the pre-Socratic philosophers, see HuaXXVII: 80–81. On the Platonic idea of logical science, see HuaXVII: 1ff.

serl argued, the theoretical attitude acquired, in three steps, a new level of rigor in the form of consistent methodology. First, philosophy became an *eidetic* science which aimed to uncover those essential forms and structures of reality that determine the manifestation of all being. Second, through Plato's work, philosophy became an essentially *logical* undertaking that sought to discover those principles and structures of cognition that regulate the formation of absolutely valid knowledge. Last, it was precisely through Plato that theory became a genuinely *cultural project* in the sense that it gave birth to a new idea of communal co-operation, a new "personality of a higher order" and a novel doctrine of "social reason" that gave rise to political idealism. Thus, in its institutional form, philosophy opened up a completely new field of communality and historicity – the new idea of the *generative constitution of meaning* – which secured its continuity through the creation and transmission of philosophical truths:

> But only in the Greeks do we have a universal ("cosmological") life-interest in the essentially new form of a purely "theoretical" attitude, and this as a communal form in which this interest works itself out for internal reasons, being the corresponding, essentially new [community] of philosophers, of scientists (mathematicians, astronomers, etc.). These are the men who, not in isolation but with one another and for one another, i.e., in interpersonally bound communal work, strive for and produce *theoria* and nothing but *theoria* whose growth and constant perfection, with the broadening of the circle of coworkers and the succession of the generations of inquirers, is finally taken up into the will with the sense of an infinite and common task.[108]

Thus, the unique character of philosophical accomplishments was embedded, first and foremost, in the new concept of *ideality* provided by the new theoretical attitude. As I already mentioned, Husserl's reading of Plato centered on the idea of *eidetic science* – the science of pure and universal es-

[108] "Aber nur bei den Griechen haben wir ein universales („kosmologisches") Lebensinteresse in der wesentiich neuartigen Gestalt einer rein „theoretischen" Einstellung, und als Gemeinschaftsform, in der es sich aus inneren Gründen auswirkt, die entsprechende wesentlich neuartige der Philosophen, der Wissenschaftler (der Mathematiker, der Astronomen usw.). Es sind die Männer, die nicht vereinzelt sondern miteinander und füreinander, also in interpersonal verbundener Gemeinschaftsarbeit, Theoria und nichts als Theoria erstreben und erwirken, deren Wachstum und stetige Vervollkommnung mit der Verbreitung des Kreises der Mitarbeitenden und der Abfolge der Forschergenerationen schließlich in den Willen aufgenommen wird mit dem Sinn einer unendlichen und allgemeinsamen Aufgabe." HuaVI: 326.

sences (*eidos*) that endow reality with its intelligible form. From early on, Husserl opposed the schoolbook interpretation of Plato's "Theory of Ideas" as a delineation of a separate region in the physical universe, the kind of "place beyond heaven" that Plato, with great use of metaphor, described in *Phaedrus*.[109] Instead, Husserl wanted to liberate Platonic idealism from the "metaphysical presuppositions"[110] that had been inherent from Aristotle to Nietzsche – presuppositions that presented Plato as a theorist of another world, blind to the binding force of manifest reality

On this topic, Husserl derived particular benefit from Hermann Lotze's *Logic* (orig. 1874) which approached Platonic idealism not in terms of metaphysical objectivity but in terms of epistemic conditionality: according to Lotze, Plato never really conceived of his ideas as separate entities or Aristotelian forms embedded in worldly realities; rather, they were epistemic principles that endowed the appearing reality its truthfulness and meaningfulness.[111] Thus, according to Lotze, Plato understood the concept of *eidos* as a category of validity (*Geltung*) rather than one of being: instead of separate "things", ideas were to be understood as fundamental prerequisites demarcating what is required for something to appear as real and true in the first place. The idea of a chair, for instance, was not to be conceived of in terms of the supratemporal archetype of a chair but as a collection of stipulations which allow us to consider a certain object a chair. Lotze claimed that because the Greek language lacked an expression for non-being Plato had to refer to these conditions by the term *eidos*.[112]

As Husserl put it in his 1919/20 series of lectures, Plato's theory of *eidos* was to be considered the first "discovery of the [domain of] *a priori*"[113] – the first unfolding of that field of ideal meanings which structure our actual experience by giving it an intelligible form. Recall that in the *Logical Investigations* (1900–01), Husserl had already discovered that the domain of ideal meanings pertained to a specific mode of perceptual givenness. Instead of "innate ideas" or "symbolic forms" embedded in natural language,

[109] Plato, *Phaedr*. 247c
[110] Husserl, E&U: 411. See also HuaIII: 48ff.
[111] Lotze 1887: 206ff.
[112] "While Plato by thus describing the Ideas, takes security for their independent validity, he has at the same time abundantly provided against the confusion of the validity thus implied with that wholly distinct reality of Existence which could only be ascribed to a durable thing." Lotze 1887: 216.
[113] F I 40/58b

ideal meanings were to be understood on the basis of a specific categorical intuition (*kategoriale Anschauung*) which transcends mere sense data and presents objects and things *as* something.[114] We do not merely sense a piece of paper and its qualities (for instance, its whiteness, coarseness) but we perceive it *as* white or coarse. From a phenomenological standpoint, as Husserl emphasized in *Ideas*, the concept of "a priori" was potentially misleading, for it seemed to refer to the idea of givenness *prior* to experience.[115] All forms of ideality, Husserl claimed, have their foundation in the concrete experience of the lifeworld – to be more precise, in the associative functions of consciousness. It is the task and potential of philosophical reflection to present these idealities "purified" from their empirical contingencies and variations. In this regard, the domain of phenomenological apriority was divided into the study of the universal structures of pure consciousness and a wide variety of "regional eidetics" delineating the different types and modalities of objective ideality.

According to Husserl, we already discover this division in Plato. In addition to the "ontology of nature in itself" – the description of ideal forms of nature – Platonic idealism delineated "the a priori methodology of a possible knowledge of nature in itself"[116], that is, the description of those logical structures that endow the manifest reality its sense and validity. To put it in phenomenological terms, the philosophical *eidos* did not merely delineate the domain of being; it also delineated the domain *evidence*, in that it aimed to articulate those ideal structures of experience (or "givenness") on the basis of which we regard something as true and valid. Nevertheless, it was also here that Plato's discovery fell short. In Husserl's view, what Plato (and the Greeks in general) "failed" to disclose was the essential relationship between those two domains of ideality – of nature and experience – and thus they were unable to articulate the idea of transcendental correlation. "Antiquity does not yet behold the great problem of subjectivity as the functioning-accomplishing subjectivity of consciousness,"[117] Husserl wrote, and it was exactly for this reason that

[114] See e.g HuaXIX/2: 657.

[115] HuaIII: 8–9. Already in this context, Husserl employed the notion of eidos to describe the phenomenological idea of eidetic givenness as distinct from the "Kantian" concept of ideality, described with the notion of Wesen. Cf. HuaXXVII: 13

[116] HuaVI: 283.

[117] "Das Altertum erschaut noch nicht das große Problem der Subjektivität als fungierend leistender Bewußtseinssubjektivität […]" HuaXXVII: 228.

Platonic (or Aristotelian) idealism did not amount to a general theory of eidetic intuition.[118] For this reason, instead of developing a general theory of the lifeworld as the universal correlate of experience, the Greek ontology of nature unfolded as a form of *cosmology*, i.e., theoretical consideration of the fundamental causes, origins or elements of manifest reality.

Be that as it may, the grandeur of Plato's discovery surpassed the perhaps necessary one-sidedness of his theory. Through the unfolding of the domain of ideas, Plato was able to approach the general question of the conditions of knowledge as such – the field of *absolute norms* that serve as the general index for all empirical truths:

> Platonic idealism, through the fully conscious discovery of the "idea" and of approximation, opened up the path of logical thinking, the "logical" science, the rational science. Ideas were taken as archetypes in which everything singular participates more or less "ideally," which everything approaches, which everything realizes more or less fully; the ideal truths belonging to the ideas were taken as the absolute norms for all empirical truths.[119]

According to Husserl, Plato's archetypical notion of ideas was embedded, above all, in mathematical and geometrical practices.[120] As is often emphasized, for the Greeks of the Classical era, mathematics did not yet constitute a unified science; rather, it referred to a number investigations dealing with some of the fundamental and most permanent characteristics of manifest reality.[121] In addition to arithmetic and geometry – the sciences of quantity and the properties of space – the field of mathematics also included music, by dealing with harmonic ratios, and astronomy,

[118] As Husserl put it in *Crisis*, Descartes was the first to genuinely articulate the motive of transcendental correlation: "What the modern period calls the theory of the understanding or of reason – in the pregnant sense "critique of reason," transcendental problematics – has the roots of its meaning in the *Cartesian Meditations.* The ancient world was not acquainted with this sort of thing, since the Cartesian epoche and its ego were unknown." HuaVI: 83.

[119] "Der platonische Idealismus brach durch die voll bewußte Entdeckung der „Idee" und der Approximation die Bahn des logischen Denkens, der „logischen" Wissenschaft, der rationalen. Ideen wurden gefaßt als Urbilder, an denen alles Singuläre Anteil hat, mehr oder minder "ideal" denen es sich annähert, die es mehr oder minder voll realisiert, die zu den Ideen gehörigen reinen Ideenwahrheiten als die absoluten Normen für alle empirischen Wahrheiten." HuaVI: 291.

[120] This point is discussed especially in F I 40/57ff. Cf. HuaVI: 18; HuaXXV: 132ff.

[121] See e.g. Liddell & Scott, LSJ, 1072.

which modeled unchangeable and eternal celestial motion.[122] At least Plato and Xenophon identified these fields of investigation with philosophy proper: since the mathematical sciences seemed to correspond with the general appreciation of constancy inherent to Greek ontology, they served as important clues for the problems of permanence and alteration posed by many of the pre-Socratic thinkers. As Plato put it in the *Republic*: "The qualities of number appear to lead to the apprehension of truth (*alētheian*)", for the philosopher "must rise out of the region of generation and lay hold on substance (*dia tēs ousias apteon*)."[123] Three seeds in the ground may turn into three beautiful flowers – what stays the same, in this regard, is the notion of "threeness" itself.

The mere "sameness" of numbers, however, was not yet enough to explain the crucial significance of mathematical ideality for the formation of philosophical ideas. In this regard, both Plato and Husserl emphasized the revolutionary character of "pure geometry", which was to be distinguished from what was known as "applied" geometrical practices, such as land surveying. What made geometry pure in this respect, was that it employed notions that could be conceived of separately from any empirical particularities. For instance, when land surveyors speak of a "foot" or a "meter", they are is speaking of a general notion that is basically the same in every instantce; however, this unit must be defined in regard to an empirical norm (whether the Doric foot, the prototype in Paris or the distance travelled by light through a vacuum in 1⁄229,792,458 of a second. Instead, when geometers speak of a 'triangle' – for instance, as being a closed figure consisting of three line segments with the sum of the interior angles being 180° – they are able to do so without reference to any particular (empirical) triangle.

The reason the length of the hypotenuse in relation to other sides is always the same is not because it conforms to an empirical norm; rather, it can be defined on the basis of a purely ideal relation. Thus, by replacing vague definitions such as "greater", "smaller", "more", "less", geometrical idealization opened up the sphere of exact concepts and purely ideal ratios such as strict "equality" or exact "relation" (as in the case of the Pythagorean Theorem). In other words, the geometer was able to operate on a

[122] Aristotle, *Met*. III.997b
[123] Plato, *Rep*. VII.525b

level of inspection that was free of all ties to empirical reality and with concepts that could be defined on purely logical terms.[124]

To follow Husserl's conceptual distinction in *Erfahrung und Urteil*, in contrast to the mere "bound idealities" of the pre-philosophical attitude – idealities that "carry reality with them and hence belong to the real world" – philosophy projected a completely new field of "free idealities" that could be conceived of without reference to individual objects.[125] Thus philosophy "deterritorialized" not only the seemingly self-evident nature of one's own homeworld but the notion of ideality in general. "Free idealities", Husserl wrote, "are not bound to territory, rather, they have their territory in the totality of the universe and in every possible universe."[126] For this reason it is understandable that Plato refused to locate idealities in the sphere of perception (*aisthēsis*) – for they are invisible (*aides*) – and argued that they could only be reached thourgh discursive cognition (*dianoia*).[127] In contrast to the universal idealities of the mythical worldview – divine forces that governed the whole universe – philosophical idealities represented a completely new type of universality that, as Husserl put it in *Ideas* I, was "strict" and absolutely "unconditional".[128] In other words, they are omnispatial and omnitemporal, true and valid in all imaginable circumstances.

Although mathematical-geometrical ideality provided the single most important paradigm for philosophical a priority, the scope of philosophical ideality was much wider. By taking its point of departure from the specific purity and exactness that characterized mathematical ideas, philosophy disclosed the field of absolute validities that provide the absolute norms for all particular truths. For Husserl, the "tremendous discovery" of Plato was that

[124] HuaXXVII: 17ff.
[125] Husserl, E&U: §65. See also HuaXXXIX: 298ff.
[126] *Ibid*.
[127] Plato, *Phaedo* 79a. However, it should be instantly acknowledged that the philosophical concept of *eidos* articulated by Plato was a result of a peculiar transformation of sense. Already the lifeworld of the pre-philosophical culture was embedded with spiritual structures that distinguished themselves from the simple reality of everyday objects. Herodotus tells a tale of Candaules of Lydia, who unashamedly proud of his wife's appearance (*eidos*), invites his favorite bodyguard Gyges to take a look at her naked body. Gyges declines this wish on the grounds of his bashfulness, for "when a woman's clothes come off, she dispenses with her modesty" – what sustains the *eidos* of Candaules' wife is exactly that which goes beyond the simple perceptual act, the surplus of experience. See Herodotus, *Hist*. 1.8.
[128] HuaIII: 18.

> […] he beheld that the sense of arithmetic and geometric propositions required, that their concepts should be conceived in clear evidence as pure, supraempirical concepts. Then, what the concepts expressed that there are ideas in completely similar sense as there are normative ideas in the ethical, practical or logical sphere. The scientific surveyor may draw his characters in the sand or on the blackboard, but when he speaks of lines, planes, circles, etc. speaks, he means from the start, when he understands himself an "exact", a "pure" the exhibit in any experience and therefore can not be seen from her is.[129]

In addition to the pure and exact idealities that we find in geometry and logic, philosophy disclosed the field of absolute norms that encompassed the totality of the spiritual world – ideals that extend from the theoretical sphere to the practical and ethical. In this regard, philosophy revealed what Husserl called the all-encompassing "*mathesis* of spirit and of humanity"[130], i.e., it was the investigation of those forms and relations of idealities that regulate the world of cultural objectivities, of community and its different forms of co-operation. Concepts such as "human being", "state", or even "friendship" were projected as pure, absolute ideas that could be grasped in their essential features – features that transcended their particular instantiations. At the same time, however, those ideal forms transcended the mere status of a descriptive category by becoming *normative principles of regulation* delineating the "best possible" human being, state and friendship. This transition, which Hume later considered one of the most common fallacies of natural thought, was to become one of the most difficult and controversial problems of Husserl's phenomenology.

In his 1906/07 lectures on logic and epistemology, Husserl had already spoken of the idea of the "normative turn" (*normative Wendung*) characteristic of logical propositions.[131] What this notion entailed was the

[129] **"Hier machte Platon eine gewaltige Entdeckung. Er erschaute, dass der Sinn der arith**metischen und geometrischen Sätze dazu aufforderte, ihre Begriffe in nüchterner Evidenz als reine, überempirische Begriffe zu nehmen, und dass was die Begriffe dann ausdrückten, Ideen seien in einem ganz ähnlichen Sinne, wie sie sich als normative Ideen der ethisch-praktischen oder der logischen Sphäre darbieten. Der wissenschaftliche Geometer mag seine Figuren in den Sand oder auf die Tafel zeichnen, aber wenn er von Geraden, Ebenen, Kreisen etc. spricht, so meint er von vornherein, wenn er sich selbst versteht, ein „Exaktes", ein „Reines", das in keiner Erfahrung aufzuweisen und daher auch nicht aus ihr zu entnehmen ist." F I 40/56b–57a

[130] HuaXXVII: 7.

[131] HuaXXIV: 30.

insight that theoretical knowledge had an essentially binding character: as soon as we become acquainted with certain logical propositions (e.g., a classical Aristotelian syllogism), they become normative in the sense that they begin to direct the practical activity of our thinking. In this regard, even deductive Aristotelian syllogisms are fundamentally *practical*. They do not merely describe the basic structures of reasoning or the natural language; rather, they *prescribe* the general conditions of "good" reasoning.

It was exactly this twofold relationship between the domains of theory and praxis that Husserl considered essential in Plato's thought. According to Husserl, Plato did not conceive of theoretical and practical ideals as two distinct domains; instead, they were ultimately bound to one another under the guidance of the single idea of *normativity*. This insight, which is perhaps most visible in Plato's dialogues of the so-called "middle period", including *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, and, above all, the *Republic*, was chiefly demonstrated by the central role given to the "idea of the good" (*idea tou agathou*) as the ultimate point of reference for all reality. As Plato put it in the sixth book of the *Republic*, "the objects of knowledge not only receive from the presence of the good their being known, but their very existence and essence (*to einai kai to tēn ousian*) is derived to them from it." However, "the good itself is not essence but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power."[132] Thus, instead of a single essence, the idea of the good illuminates the whole universe of ideas and structures it into a normatively comprehensible totality.[133] For this reason, theoretical ideas are also "good" and worth striving for – i.e., as comprehend them is to connect with the true and "waking" character of human rationality.

What he considered as the key element of this Platonic legacy was the insistence that philosophical activity has a fundamentally practical underpinning. Despite its rejection of the practical motives of the natural attitude, theoretical cognition – and the novel mode of ideality implied within it – was to be understood as nothing less than a "function of practical reason."[134] To put it conversely, all genuinely ethical striving necessarily includes within itself the motive of theoretical knowledge, i.e., the striving to know and disclose the "best possible" in its absolutely binding

[132] Plato, *Rep*. 509b.
[133] Here, the comparison to "sun" in *Rep*. 508a is of special importance. On the Platonic connection, see also Steinbock 1994: 454.
[134] HuaVIII: 201.

character. Furthermore, in this regard, Husserl emphasized that it was precisely the "intellect" that was "*the servant of the will*".[135] Even theoretical cognition can be fully appreciated in the total horizon of self-responsibility which ultimately provides the common foundation for both theoretical and practical cognition.

Thus, despite this acknowledgement of the normative dimension of Plato's philosophy, Husserl also attempted to articulate the "normative turn" from a less metaphysical angle. As Husserl emphasized in his lecture on ethics, ethical evaluation relies on its own type of evidence, which cannot be simply returned to theoretical cognition (See also Ch. 1.4). Thus, it was the task of phenomenology to articulate itself in the form of a novel "synthesis of theory and praxis"[136] – a synthesis that was to rectify the characteristically modern (i.e., post-Galilean) division between "objective" theory and "subjective" praxis. (As I will argue in part 4, this rectification entailed a novel approach to the temporal aspects of this synthesis).

Not all idealities, however, could be grasped in the manner of mathematical idealities. In contrast to the *exact idealities* of geometry, arithmetics and logics, which could be grasped once and for all, the spiritual idealities characteristic of the lifeworld were essentially incomplete in character. The idea of a "human being" or a "state", Husserl argued, was projected as a kind of limit-value or "ideal pole" that could only be approached gradually. For instance, the full sense of the idea of "human being" could only be approached through partial definitions, like "two-legged mammal" or "rational animal"; however, these definitions were to be understood merely as partial outlines of the complete idea or "essence" of a human being. As Husserl insisted, Plato did not merely claim his concept of theory to be the disclosure of a novel sphere of ideas; rather, it was "a completely new type of universal world-view, a world-philosophy that we have characterized as *teleological idealism*."[137] Here, what Husserl means with the specific teleological structure of idealism is not that all beings naturally strive towards their ideal form (what we might call "Aristotelian" teleo-

[135] Ibid.
[136] HuaVI: 327.
[137] "Es ist also nicht ein zufälliger, sondern notwendiger Zusammenhang, der sich in der historischen Tatsache ausspricht, dass Platon nicht nur der Entdecker der Idee <ist>, sondern in eins damit der Entdecker jenes neuen Typus universeller Weltanschauung, Weltphilosophie, den wir als teleologischen Idealismus bezeichnet haben." F I 40/43a. My italics.

logy). Rather, what this expression entails is that through the emergence pure idealities, philosophy was the first to disclose the field of perpetual meaning-creation in the pursuit of absolute ideals. Instead of merely being a multitude of particular conceptions (*doxai*), philosophy was able to institute a permanent framework for their accumulation and evaluation. This is what the Greeks called science, *epistēmē* (from the concepts *epi* and *histemi*, literally "to place upon"), the structural principle for the accretion of human knowledge in the form of axioms and propositions.[138]

Thus, from a generative perspective, the emergence of theoretical ideality brought about not only a new class of cultural objects but also a completely new *horizon of production*. In contrast to the kinds of worldly practices where different projects and goals follow one another in temporal succession – the raising of a child, the building of a pyramid or the appeasement of gods – the theoretical attitude gave birth to a class of *ideal goals* that can never be fully attained in concrete action. Conceived of as a universal task that deals with the totality of beings, philosophy discloses an area of pure idealities and infinite horizons where each every single truth is only given a relative status in respect to the complete task. Particular scientific truths were understood as a partial grasp of the all-embracing horizon, as a transitional phase on the way towards the full sense of *epistēmē*. The end of philosophy is something that can never be completely reached, for as Husserl says, the full sense of truth always functions as an "infinitely distant point"[139] – as an ever retreating limit. Every philosophical system or conceptualization is a finite grasp of the full sense of being, "a more or less successful attempt to realize the guiding idea of the infinity and the totality of truths".[140]

> Science, accordingly, signifies the idea of infinity of tasks, of which at any time a finite number have been disposed of and are retained as

[138] Although we are mostly familiar with the notion of axiom from mathematical context – especially from the Euclidean systematization of geometry – the Greek notion of scientific *axiōma* signified primarily a self-evident principle that can be discovered in all branches of investigation. Aristotle, for one, argued "all the demonstrative sciences employ axioms" Arist. *Metaph*. 997a7, 1005b33 – although he also registers the more limited meaning.

[139] HuaVI: 324.

[140] "Die jeweils historisch wirkliche Philcsophie ist der mehr oder minder gelungene Versuch, die leitende Idee der Unendlichkeit und dabei sogar Allheit der Wahrheiten zu verwirklichen." HuaVI, 338. "Ultimately", writes Husserl in *The Origin of Geometry,* "objective, absolutely firm knowledge of truth is an infinite idea." HuaVI, 373.

> persisting validities. These make up at the same time the fund of premises for an infinite horizon of tasks as the unity of one all-encompassing task.[141]

Thus, we can observe how, from the perspective of generativity, the emergence of scientific ideality signified a crucial transition in the transmission of cultural objectivities. In contrast to the typical objects of everyday life – tools, material goods, etc. – specifically theoretical or scientific accomplishments distinguished themselves, first of all, by their unique *temporality*. Unlike the accomplishments of everyday practices, the products of theory were not exhausted in the course of worldly time; rather, they were able to surpass the perishability of the real world. In other words, theory opened up a completely new level in the intergenerational constitution of meaning which was able to remain unchanged despite the historical and cultural circumstances, for the theoretical attitude "produces in any number of acts of production by one person or any number of persons something identically the same, identical in sense and validity."[142] Historical periodization was no longer conceived of an obstacle to the identical transmission of sense, because the universal tradition of philosophy was able to function as the absolute plane of perpetual creation of sense. This was what Husserl called the revolutionary effect of science and philosophy:

> Scientific culture under the guidance of ideas of infinity means, then, a revolutionization [*Revolutionierung*] of the whole culture, a revolutionization in the very manner in which humanity creates culture.[143]

This *revolution* is perhaps best understood through Husserl's repeated definition of philosophy as an "infinite task" (*unendliche Aufgabe*), a concept that

[141] "Wissenschaft bezeichnet also die Idee einer Unendlichkeit von Aufgaben, von denen jederzeit eine Endlichkeit schon erledigt und als bleibende Geltung aufbewahrt ist. Diese bildet zugleich den Fond von Prämissen für einen unendlichen Aufgabenhorizont als Einheit einer allumgreifenden Aufgabe." HuaVI, 323–324. HuaVI: 323–324. Buckley (1998) emphasizes also the significance of Husserl's term in the University of Göttingen (1901–1916) – where he worked with a number of mathematicians – for his idea of scientific community as a personality of a higher order.

[142] HuaVI: 323.

[143] "Wissenschaftliche Kultur unter Ideen der Unendlichkeit bedeutet also eine Revolutionierung der gesamten Kultur, eine Revolutionierung in der ganzen Weise des Menschentums als kulturschaffenden." HuaVI: 325. Translation modified. On this point see also Schuhmann 1988: 159ff.

Husserl adopted from the neo-Kantians.[144] Instead of a simple "doctrine" (*Lehre*) that could be passed on to new generations, philosophy introduced the idea of cultural accomplishment in the form of a *formal project* that could not be simply rendered in the form of substantive content. Philosophy, which was itself born out of the relativization of all traditions, did not simply replace the traditionality of the pre-philosophical world by instituting a new tradition; rather, it replaced the very idea of traditionality with *teleological directedness*, or, with a new "teleological sense" (*Zwecksinn*) which remains fundamentally identical despite historical variation.[145] It found its basic inspiration not from common memory but from the collective commitment to the infinite task of philosophy – from the shared "love of ideas" (*Ideenliebe*) on the basis of the all-embracing horizon. Through the idealization of the category of *telos*, philosophy was able to embark upon a completely new type of cultural project which could be preserved unchanged in the course of historical time. Unlike other branches of culture, such as art, literature, agriculture, that allow themselves to be classified according to their historical and territorial typicalities (Greek sculpture, modern literature etc.), philosophy produced a domain of creative work which was absolutely singular.[146] Although the concrete development of philosophy changes the possibilities of philosophical thinking, our striving, as such, is fundamentally the same as that of Plato and Aristotle.

The intrinsic corollary of this singularity was of course the essential *sharedness* of philosophical accomplishments. Although theoretical insights can be classified according to their origin, as in the case of the Pythagorean Theorem, due to their purely ideal character, the products of theory cannot be possessed by anyone.[147] Thus, it is understandable that when speaking about the arrangement of property in the ideal state of the *Republic*, Plato made Socrates quote the old proverb "friends (*philoi*) possess

[144] This connection is entertained already in the 1907 *Ding und Raum* lectures: neo-Kantians employed this notion to emphasize the open character of the "noumenal" definitions of a being, i.e., the "thing in itself". See HuaXVI: 134. This connection has also been illustrated by Gasché 2009: 354. On the later use of the "infinite task" as a defining feature of philosophy, see especially HuaVI, 72, 324, 336ff.; Hua VII: 3; HuaVIII: 216–217; HuaXXIX: 408, 421.

[145] HuaXXIX: 34.

[146] As Husserl further emphasized, whereas the sophist movements could still speak of philosophies in the plural, for the classical period no such thing was possible. See HuaXXIX: 281, 378ff.

[147] I am excluding here the questions of contemporary patent legislation.

everything in common"[148] – or as he continued in *Laws*, the best possible state would indeed be that of "friends" (*philoi*) who have everything in common, so that "even things naturally private [would] become in a way communized."[149] In one of his *Kaizo* essays, Husserl actually described the philosophical community as fundamentally "communistic".[150] Theory, as a form of production, was not only critical towards all "imperialistic" constellations based on a central will; it also revealed a field of accomplishments that was common to all.[151]

Thus, we can see how philosophy, correlatively to the new horizon of production, also signified a fundamental transition in the idea of community as such. Not only did the theoretical motive separate the idea rationality from its empirical contours, but it was also able to formulate a notion of interpersonal association that was indifferent towards all particular divisions – ethnic, cultural, and political. To put it succinctly, *philosophy idealized the very notion of community as such*: it delineated an idea of a human collective that was independent of any particular group of people, be they "friend [or] enemy, Greek or barbarian, child of God's people or child of God-hostile people."[152] This "supraspatial and supratemporal sociality"[153] of the scientific community gave rise to the completely new teleological idea of *the universal community*. Furthermore, it was universal in a new, emphatic sense: it was potentially inclusive of all rational beings, including those who had yet to be born. In contrast to "political" communities, which relied on the difference between friend and enemy, the philosophical community knew only friends (*philoi*). Its defining characteristic was a fundamental openness towards not only towards all living human beings but also towards future generations:

> Through individual personalities like Thales, there arises thus a new humanity: men who [live] the philosophical life, who create philosophy in the manner of a vocation as a new sort of cultural configuration. Understandably a correspondingly new sort of commu-

[148] Plato, *Rep*. 424a1-2.
[149] Plato, *Laws*, 739c.
[150] HuaXXVII: 90, 377.
[151] This makes understandable also Husserl's critical remarks on capitalism – a worldview that prevents "the unselfish dedication (*Hingabe*) to pure ideas". See Husserl's letter to Arnold Metzger, HuaXXV: xxx.
[152] "[…] aus jedem Kulturkreis, Freund und Feind, Grieche oder Barbar, Kind des Gottesvolkes oder der Gott feindlichen Völker." HuaXXVII: 77.
[153] HuaXXIX: 395

> nalization arises. These ideal structures of *theoria* are concurrently lived through and taken over without any difficulty by others who reproduce the process of understanding and production. Without any difficulty they lead to cooperative work, mutual help through mutual critique. Even the outsiders, the non-philosophers, become aware of this peculiar sort of activity. Through sympathetic understanding they either become philosophers themselves, or, if they are otherwise vocationally too occupied, they learn from philosophers.[154]

Thus, the emergence of philosophy – viewed from the perspective of generativity and historicity – is best understood as a *twofold critique of limits*.[155] First of all, through the infinite horizon of pure idealities, philosophy gave birth to the insistence that the achievable limits of practical activity, which constantly defined the productive horizon of the pre-philosophical world, be transcended. In contrast to what Husserl called the "first historicity" (*erste Historizität*) that was characteristic of the pre-philosophical world, philosophy unfolded as "an advancing transformation in the form of a new type of historical development", i.e., a unique form of "unlimited" historicity which cannot be exhausted in the course of worldly time.[156] By envisaging a domain of absolute ideals, philosophy was able to overcome the finite temporality of pre-philosophical praxis. Secondly, by articulating itself in the form of absolute ideas, philosophy strengthened the inherent deconstruction of territorial limits already latent in the critique of

[154] "In vereinzelten Persönlichkeiten, wie Thales etc., erwächst damit ein neues Menschentum; Menschen, die das philosophische Leben, Philosophie als eine neuartige Kulturgestalt berufsmäßig schaffen. Begreiflicherweise erwächst alsbald eine entsprechend neuartige Vergemeinschaftung. Diese idealen Gebilde der Theoria sind ohne weiteres im Nachverstehen und Nacherzeugen mitgelebt und mitübernommen. Ohne weiteres führen sie zum Miteinanderarbeiten, sich wechselseitig durch Kritik Helfen. Auch die Außenstehenden, die Nichtphilosophen, werden aufmerksam auf das sonderliche Tun und Treiben. Nachverstehend werden sie entweder nun selbst zu Philosophen oder, wenn sie sonst berufsmäßig zu sehr gebunden sind, zu Mitlernenden." HuaVI: 332–333. Translation modified.

[155] I am referring here to the twofold characterization of the concept of limit (*peras*) in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* V.17 – which is also evident in many of the Indo-European languages. According to him, "limit" denotes "the furthest part of each thing and the first point outside which no part of a thing can be found," but it can also mean "the end [*telos*] of each thing." Thus limits do not confine only concrete boundaries (*horos*), but they also structure the purposeful character of natural entities and human activities for "the reasonable man, at least, always acts for a purpose, and this is a limit; for the end is a limit" (*Met.* II, 994b14–16). See Miettinen 2010.

[156] HuaVI: 323. On the notion of "first historicity" (*erste Historizität*), see HuaVI: 326, 502ff.; HuaXXIX: 40–41.

mythology. Philosophy, inspired by the confrontation between home and alien, was able to provide the idea of the "first objective world", standing free from myths and sable on the infinite horizon of ideal truths. Alongside the ground of identification shared by all communities – the world of "universal earth ground" and sky – there emerged the novel idea of an "infinitely distant" cultural world.[157] This world – the world of philosophical ideality – emerged as a unique form of generativity different in kind from the natural traditionality of cultures, a generativity that resisted all traditional demarcations between home and alien:

> Unlike all other cultural works, philosophy is not a movement of interest which is bound to the soil of the national tradition. Aliens, too, learn to understand it and generally take part in the immense cultural transformation which radiates out from philosophy. […] philosophy, which has grown up out of the universal critical attitude toward anything and everything pre-given in the tradition, is not inhibited in its spread by any national boundaries (*Schranken*).[158]

It is exactly here that we discover the key insight into the "absolute sense" of European universalism. Philosophy, through the infinite horizon of ideal truths, was able to articulate itself in the new forms of *historicity and generativity*. By understanding itself in regard to a horizon of production which is absolutely singular, philosophy was able to project the idea of universal historicity – a temporal horizon which is absolutely singular and which is not exhausted in the course of worldly time. On the basis of the new idea of sharedness, philosophy gave rise to a novel form of territorial universalism that was willing to overcome all generative divisions between home and alien, i.e., it was a movement that was willing to *transcend all cultural limits*. To borrow a phrase coined by Novalis, philosophy was born out of a sense of homesickness, "the desire to be everywhere at home."[159] In Husserl's view, it is exactly this desire that constitutes the core of the spiritual form of Europe.

[157] HuaXXVII: 241.

[158] "Anders als alle anderen Kulturwerke ist sie keine an den Boden der nationalen Tradition gebundene Interessenbewegung. Auch Fremd-Nationale lernen nachverstehen und nehmen überhaupt Anteil an der gewaltigen Kulturverwandlung, die von der Philosophie ausstrahlt. […] die Philosophie, aus universaler kritischer Einstellung gegen alle und jede traditionale Vorgegebenheit erwachsen, in ihrer Ausbreitung durch keine nationalen Schranken gehemmt ist." (HuaVI: 333–35)

[159] "Die Philosophie ist eigentlich Heimweh—Trieb überall zu Hause zu sein." Novalis 1993: 434 (fr. no. 857).

It should be emphasized that what Husserl described here as the birth of the philosophical "personality of a higher order" – the community of theory and its specific mode of generativity – was first and foremost an *ideal*. Husserl was well aware that the emergence of philosophical communities did not instantly transform the cultural landscape of Greek city-states – in reality, the ideal structures of theory were not adopted without difficulty nor did outsiders participate in the philosophical community with purely "sympathetic understanding". Rather, as Husserl himself also admitted, the community of theory was subjected to all sorts of empirical obstacles, beginning with its clash with traditional religiosity and the suspicious attitude of political power. Philosophical communities were forced to do battle with "conservatives [who were] satisfied with tradition" – a battle that also extended to the sphere of political power.[160] As the trial of Socrates and Plato's unfortunate visit to Syracuse showed, philosophy was often painfully forced to retreat from the light of the day.

Again, Husserl's focus of interest was not so much on the concrete obstacles or even persecutions that the philosophical community was forced to endure. What he was interested in (although this interest often needs to be read between the lines) was the general – or should we say "structural" – process of meaning-transformation that philosophy ushered in within the overall sphere of culture. In Husserl's view, the "revolutionary development" that philosophy triggered within the cultural sphere was not brought about merely by the growing expansion of the philosophical community; rather, the emergence of the philosophical community brought with it a kind of *reformatory* interest that was reflected in different spheres of culture. The theoretical attitude and its novel praxis, argued Husserl, also created a "human posture which immediately intervenes in the whole remainder of practical life with all its demands and ends, the ends of the historical tradition in which one is brought up and which receives its validity from this source."[161] Instead of a clearly identifiable causal relationship, the cultural significance of philosophy appeared in the form of *gradual transitions* in many of the key ideas and activities of the social-communal

[160] HuaVI: 335.

[161] "[…] menschliche Haltung, die alsbald eingreift in das ganze übrige praktische Leben, mit allen seinen Forderungen und Zwecken, den Zwecken der historischen Tradition, in die man hineinerzogen ist und die von da her gelten." HuaVI: 334. See also HuaXXIX: 14.

sphere. For instance, while philosophy did not simply replace religion or politics, it launched a series of processes that were also reflected in the extra-philosophical activities and practices. This is not to say that philosophy simply "became political"; in fact, the political odysseys of philosophy produced less than flattering results. Rather, *politics and religion themselves became philosophical*: they acquired a new sense in accordance with the infinite task of philosophy.

> The Greeks who, in consequence to the creation of philosophy in its pregnant (Platonic) sense, had planted a completely new form-idea to the European culture, whereby it took upon the overall character of a rational culture out of scientific rationality – or that philosophical culture.[162]

This transformation was embedded, first of all, in the novel idea of shared responsibility that was characteristic of the philosophical "personality of a higher order". In Husserl's view, one of the key corollaries of Plato's idealism was that it radicalized the Socratic principles of self-responsibility and theoretical vocation by turning them into essentially generative notions. Once we take seriously the new generative sense of meaning-constitution, the Socratic ideal of "life according to the best possible evidence" cannot remain a mere individual endeavor. Rather, the absolute accountability of the philosopher needs to be rearticulated in the social sphere: responsibility needs to be understood as a *common* principle. In other words, insofar as the philosophical community lives for the perpetual creation of meaning according to the infinite horizon, philosophical responsibility, in its fullest sense, cannot be carried by the individual – since the mode of production that characterizes philosophical accomplishments is communal, the notions of autonomy and responsibility must also be rendered in an interpersonal form.[163] As each and every participant is equally responsible for the common project, philosophy cannot remain a mere individual

[162] "Die Griechen sind es, die in Konsequenz der Schöpfung der Philosophie in ihrem prägnanten (Platonischen) Sinn der europäischen Kultur eine allgemeine neuartige Formidee eingepflanzt haben, wodurch sie den allgemeinen Formcharakter einer rationalen Kultur aus wissenschaftlicher Rationalität oder einer philosophischen Kultur annahm." HuaXXVII: 84. On the notion of a "philosophical culture", see HuaVII: 203–207; HuaXXIX: 138.

[163] See, for instance, Husserl's emphatic statement in HuaXXVII: 241 ("Autonomie ist nicht Sache der vereinzelten Individuen, sondern, auf dem Wege über ihre Nation, der Menschheit.").

undertaking – it must be understood as the activity of a personality of a higher order. As Husserl put it in an appendix to *Crisis*:

> It may be, here, that this ruling end [of philosophy and science] is ultimately a communal end, i.e., a personal life-task which is a partial task (if one can speak of a "part" in such a case) within a communal task, so that the individual personal undertaking of work functions concurrently, and consciously so for each of the participants, in a communal undertaking.[164]

This is not to say, however, that philosophy, and its novel idea of collective responsibility extending to the infinite horizon of future generations, simply did away with personal responsibility. Both Plato and Aristotle emphasized the essential individuality and self-sufficiency (Gr. *autarkeia*) of philosophical contemplation, which ultimately relies on a personal relationship with the domain of theoretical truth.[165] Rather, as Husserl put it, the idea of collective responsibility was understood as the "higher level" of philosophical rationality, which, nevertheless, had its necessary foundation in the responsibility of the individual. To put it in the language already employed in the second part of this work, this responsibility was to be understood as the genuine "concretization" of the first-person perspective. Furthermore, it was exactly through this fundamentally horizontal responsibility that philosophy was able to introduce a completely new "division of labor", one, which relied on the essential interchangeability of particular responsibilities. What has been proved as true and valid, others can confirm as equally true and valid. Through this division, the philosophical community is able to develop a responsibility of a higher order – a responsibility that is not merely "the sport of the individual" (*Sport der Einzelperson*) but which finds its genuine essence only in the overall horizon of generativity.[166]

The obverse of the shared responsibility of the philosophical community was of course the common task of culturally examining philo-

[164] "Hierbei mag es sein, daß dieser regierende Zweck letztlich ein Gemeinschaftszweck ist, d.i. personale Lebensaufgabe, Teilaufgabe (wenn man da von Teil sprechen kann) einer Gemeinschaftsaufgabe ist, der einzelne personale Arbeitsbetrieb mitfungierend ist, und bewußtseinsmäßig, für jeden der „Teilhaber" in einem Gemeinschaftsbetrieb." HuaVI: 459. Cf. HuaXXIX: 393

[165] See e.g. Aristotle, *E.N.* 1177a17ff.

[166] HuaXXIX: 226.

sophy's own premises. Alongside the idea that philosophers should engage in a constant self-critique of their premises, the common horizon of the philosophical community broadened this principle by making it the social relation *par excellance*. Free critique, as Husserl emphasized, was not only a single element in the philosophical enterprise; rather, it was the single most important factor for constituting the peculiar unity of the philosophical community.[167] What made the philosophical critique distinguishably "free" was that it relied, first of all, on the horizontal equality of the parties involved: while accession to philosophical ideas is solely dependent on the capacity for universal reason, no single party can claim to have natural advantage. In other words, philosophical critique is conducted free from the burden of tradition: philosophy is a pursuit in which every single human being is essentially equal. Furthermore, this critique is also free in terms of its scope, for it concerns "all life and all life-goals, all cultural products and systems that have already arisen out of the life of man".[168] It concerns not only the present life-form but also that generative background of "presuppositions" which provides the present moment with its specific character. This is exactly what Husserl calls the "peculiar universality" of the critical stance of the philosophizing individual, i.e., "his resolve not to accept unquestioningly any pre-given opinion or tradition so that he can inquire, in respect to the whole traditionally pre-given universe, after what is true in itself, an ideality."[169] For philosophical culture, tradition *as such* carries no particular weight; it functions only as the implicit background of the critical task of philosophy.

This insight was also highlighted by the significant transformation that Greek philosophy brought about in the most essential social activity of human beings – language. In its pursuit of unattainable, pure idealities, philosophy needed to admit that human communication, inextricably bound as it is to material contingency, can never fully exhaust the domain of these idealities. In other words, philosophy broke the simple union between things and words, a fact that was demonstrated by the emphasis that both

[167] HuaVI: 336.

[168] "[…] der universalen Kritik alles Lebens und aller Lebensziele, aller aus dem Leben der Menschheit schon erwachsenen Kulturgebilde und Kultursysteme […]." HuaVI: 329.

[169] "[…] die eigentümliche Universalität der kritischen Haltung, die entschlossen ist, keine vorgegebene Meinung, keine Tradition fraglos hinzunehmen, um sogleich für das ganze traditionell vorgegebene Universum nach dem an sich Wahren, einer Idealität, zu fragen." HuaVI: 333.

Plato and Aristotle placed on the *symbolic character* of (human) language. However, to say that language employs different written symbols does not merely entail that it functions through "signs", or that it is always backed up by a certain material dimension of "speech" or "text". What the Greek term *symbolon* underlined was also the idea that human expression relies on a certain contingency, that the relationship between a word and a thing is that of "throwing-together" (*syn* + *ballein*); i.e., it is fundamentally coincidental and context-bound. Words do not emerge naturally (*fysei*), but they have their origin in human sociality – a point that was confirmed by Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, which argued that human *logos* derives its sense through common "social agreement" – *kata synthēkēn* – and not because it embodies a natural reference to reality (an argument ridiculed in Plato's *Cratylus*).[170]

Thus, we can say that philosophy had a twofold relation to language. On the one hand, in its pursuit of pure idealities, philosophy needed to escape the social and material contingency of human logos – the "shadows of the artificial objects" (*tōn skeuastōn skias*) of the cave, as Plato put it in the Republic.[171] For this purpose, it found a safe haven in the faculty of *nous*, "pure intelligence", free of all ties to the discursive structures of human cognition. For this reason, Plato considered *nous* the immortal part of the soul, which, as opposed to our sense faculties, could grasp "self-subsisting ideas" in their existence.[172] Aristotle, perhaps even more strongly, made *nous* the central faculty of his scientific method, the way of grasping the purely intuitive insights of manifest reality.[173] On the other hand, philosophy could not completely do away with language, for it needed to return to the social sphere in order to make its discoveries understandable. Hence, for the philosopher, argues Plato, "words are the greatest instrument" (*logoi de toutou malista organon*), for it is only through linguistic communication that philosophy can execute its primary purpose in the communal sphere.[174] For this reason, Plato even went so far as to call the philosopher a "lover of logos" (*philologos*), the

[170] Aristotle, *De int.* 16a9
[171] Plato, *Rep.* 515c.
[172] Plato, *Tim.* 51d.
[173] See, e.g. Aristotle, *E. N.* VI, 2. 1139a18-29; *E. N.* VI, 11. 1143a35-b5
[174] Plato, *Rep.* 582d.

caretaker of that faculty which binds human beings to one another.[175]

Of course, the ideas of free communication and critique were not yet enough to explain the transformatory process that philosophy triggered in the wider sphere of culture. Philosophy needed to acquire a medium to bridge the gap between the philosophical and non-philosophical community – a medium that would displace the seemingly self-evident culture of traditionality and also institute the new critical spirit of the theoretical attitude in other spheres of culture. For this purpose, philosophy utilized the central social practice for elevating human beings to the common life, i.e., the practice of education (*Bildung*). "[P]hilosophy spreads in a twofold manner," Husserl wrote, "as a broadening vocational community of philosophers and as the concurrently broadening community movement of education."[176] This movement, which both Plato and Aristotle called *paideia* ("education", but also "cultivation"), was seen as an integral part of the philosophical enterprise, without which philosophy would remain a mere esoteric practice.

Although both Plato and Aristotle took advantage of the pre-philosophical *paideia*, philosophy did not simply replicate the existing institutions of education; instead, it radically challenged some of their fundamental presuppositions. In contrast to the very crude idea of "education" as the transplantation of different views or cultural practices, philosophical *paideia* was to be understood, first and foremost, in connection with the theoretical attitude's critical stance towards tradition.[177] Instead of being a "technical" virtue characteristic of other forms of worldly praxis, education was understood, first of all, in connection to philosophical skepticism's critical approach to tradition. *Paideia* became not only a matter of acquiring knowledge but also of renouncing it – it articulated itself in the new idea of personal autonomy characteristic of scientific evidence. Moreover, instead of a simple doctrine, *paideia* was understood in connection to the idea of human capacities and their development. This sense – already present in the popular sophistical conception of *paideia* as the development of rhetorical-humanistic virtues (*aretai*) – was to cover

[175] Plato, *Rep*. 582e.
[176] "So breitet sich die Philosophie in doppelter Weise aus, als sich weitende Berufsgemeinschaft der Philosophen und als eine sich mitweitende Gemeinschaftsbewegung der Bildung." HuaVI: 333. Cf. HuaXXIX: 15.
[177] This transformation is illuminated by Bremer 1989.

a wide variety of human qualities from temperance to wisdom. What this transition entailed was that even philosophy, besides denoting a specific attitude, could be defined in terms of a specific "disposition" (what Aristotle called *hexis*) that could be developed and cultivated in the course of time.

The principle of *autonomy* in regard to the received tradition implied in the Greek notion of *paideia* is clearly highlighted in the comprarison Plato makes in book III of the *Republic* between poorly and well educated cities. As Plato argues, it is a characteristic of a poorly educated city that it has to provide a great number of "courtrooms and dispensaries" (*dikastēria te kai iatreia*), because it shows that the norms of righteous behavior are not enforced by the individuals themselves.[178] For Plato, the existence of "justice imported from others, who thus become your masters and judges" results precisely "from a lack of such qualities in oneself"[179] – i.e., external laws are the manifestation of a lack of justice in the individuals themselves. For this reason, *paideia* is realized through the specific *internalization of the law*: to be educated means that one is able to function as the judge of one's own actions, to submit oneself to an external norm: "It is better for everyone to be governed by the divine and the intelligent, preferably indwelling and his own, but in default of that imposed from without, in order that we all so far as possible may be akin and friendly because our governance and guidance are the same."[180]

In his series of lectures *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, Husserl uses the classic example of Plato's *Meno*, in which Socrates seeks to demonstrate the a priori character of ideas by showing how a slave-boy can "easily" learn to double the size of a square by using mere geometrical deduction.[181] As Socrates claims, this process does not involve "teaching, but only recollection" (*hos ou phēmi didachēn einai all' anamnēsin*).[182] Socrates does not "pour" the information into the head of the slave-boy; he rather helps him to discover the truth for himself. "I do nothing but ask questions; I do not instruct,"[183] says Socrates – a principle that we also find in Husserl's own methodological considerations in the *Crisis*: "I seek not to instruct but only

[178] Plato, *Rep*. 405a.
[179] Plato, *Rep*. 405b.
[180] Plato, *Rep*. 590d.
[181] F I 42/123aff.
[182] Plato, *Meno* 82a.
[183] Plato, *Meno* 84c.

to lead, to point out and describe what I see."[184] If the true scope of philosophy indeed consists of the domain of *a priori* ideas, then philosophical education cannot consist of the mere mediation of particular truths; rather, it needs to be articulated in the form of self-examination. As Husserl puts it, understood from the philosophical perspective, true learning is the "art of remembrance"[185] – a *contemplation of what one already knows*.[186]

To further expand on this insight, it may even be said that the Platonic concept of education took its point of departure from a certain kind of phenomenological *epoché* which suspends (or "brackets") the belief in culturally inherited conceptions and dogmas. In *Meno*, Plato ends up in arguing that while the philosophical attitude may produce a state of bewilderment comparable to being stunned by a torpedo ray, this state is, nevertheless, productive. It guides one towards the discovery of a priori truths within oneself: "for now he will push on in the search [for truth] gladly, being aware that he lacks knowledge."[187] In this venture, Socrates and the slave-boy are on an equal footing: if the formation of a priori ideas relies on the universal faculty of reason, then there is no reason to argue for any kind of fundamental difference in respect to accessing the realm of ideas.

Presented merely from the perspective of the philosophizing individual, the aforementioned argument may appear somewhat naïve. To say that philosophy is fundamentally neutral in regard to cultural and social divisions may lead us to forget that it is nevertheless exposed to these divisions. From the perspective of society, the very emergence of this attitude is inextricably linked to the rise of the class of free individuals fortunate enough to enjoy the privileges of leisure. Leo Strauss may have been right in claiming that in Plato's dialogues one rarely comes across an encounter between two equal locators – for instance, how could the slave-boy challenge Socrates in a spirit of free critique? – so that even the ideal state could not simply do away with societal differences.[188] Although the philosophical community relied on the fundamental equality of its members

[184] "Ich versuche zu führen, nicht zu belehren, nur aufzuweisen, zu beschreiben, was ich sehe." HuaVI: 17

[185] F I 42/123b

[186] This point is entertained in numerous dialogues. See esp. *Rep.* 514a, *Seventh Letter,* 344d-e. On the distinction between *paideia* and *tekhne*, see *Prot.* 312b.

[187] Plato, *Meno* 84b.

[188] Strauss 1964: 55.

– equality in terms of fundamental rational capabilities – its transition to the sphere of political life could not follow the same principle. As Husserl himself admitted, philosophy itself contained a "fateful internal division of the unity of people into the educated and the uneducated"[189] – a division that was to become the central point of departure for Greek political philosophy.

In the following, I would like to interpret Husserl's reading of the political significance of Greek philosophy as a reply to this problematic. Greek philosophy – originally the product of a "few exceptional persons" (*Sonderlingen*)[190] – did not immediately transform the common framework of the Greek city-state. Rather, it needed to be articulated in the form of a cultural-societal project which was to endow the idea of philosophical rationality with an institutionalized form. Thus, instead of "letting the communal life go as it goes, and culture grow as it pleases", philosophical praxis wanted to "ground itself in a culture of free reason and be led by it".[191] The intention was to articulate philosophy in the form of lasting accomplishments that corresponded with the open and infinite horizon of philosophy. The idea of an "ideally directed total society (*ideal gerichtete Allsozietät*)"[192] which would reflect the political significance of universalism was analyzed by Husserl in his reflections on the Platonic idea of the state. The Platonic ideal, which Husserl interpreted as the first instance of genuine social-ethical thinking, became the most important touchstone for his attempt to articulate the political dimension of the phenomenological enterprise. In the end, it also became a horizon which needed to be transcended for the sake of a normative ideal of communal existence that could genuinely incorporate the goal of infinite renewal. As we shall observe later, this normative ideal was to be understood in terms of a "community of love".

[189] HuaVI: 333.
[190] HuaVI: 336.
[191] "Statt das Gemeinschaftsleben laufen zu lassen, wie es läuft, und Kultur werden, wachsen zu lassen, wie sie eben wächst, soll nun, und so will es die Menschheit in sich selbst, eine neue und wahre Kultur, eine Kultur aus reiner Vernunft, begründet und durchgefürt werden." HuaXXXV: 55.
[192] HuaVI: 336. Cf. Brague 2009: 29.

3.4. Philosophy and Political Universalism: Politics of the Best Possible

Multiplicity is the condition of political life. Without the inextricable discrepancies and conflicts of interest that appear in the life of human beings, there would be no need for the domain which unfolds as the site of human diversity. For the Greeks, this domain was known by the name *polis*, the "state" or the "city-state". In contrast to the mere material and territorial dimension of the city – in Greek, *astu* – *polis* was conceived in connection to human interests, as a field of different values, appreciations and goals.[193] As Aristotle puts it in his *Politics*, a "*polis* is composed of people who differ in type (*eidos*) […] [and] cannot be composed of people who are like one another"[194] – from the beginning on, the fundamental question of Greek political thinking was how to cope not only with the quantitative multitude of human subjects but also with their qualitative differences (hence the word *eidos*). According to Hannah Arendt, the fundamental achievement of Greek politics was that it was able to pacify this ever imminent conflict by transferring it from the domain of straight power into speech, *logos.* Speech not only brings people together but it also lets their particular appearances to appear. This is what Aristotle meant as he coined the classical definition of human being as *zōon logon echon* – "the creature possessing speech" – with the idea of political animal (*zōon politikon*).[195] *Polis* is what lets the essence of human being to come about.

Accordingly, what the Greeks meant by "political" did not concern merely the relation between I and the other but the mediation of this relation through a *third party*. A political relation is something that is defined by a common background, for instance, a shared religious heritage or the image of citizenship. To engage in a political relation with other subjects

[193] It did not serve merely the needs of biological life, *zōē*, but life understood as the sphere of human interests, *bios*.
[194] Aristotle, *Pol*. 1261a23–24. Cf. Plato's *Rep*.: "And Adeimantus said, "But, perhaps, Socrates, the former way is easier." "It would not, by Zeus, be at all strange," said I; "for now that you have mentioned it, it occurs to me myself that, to begin with, our several natures are not all alike but different. One man is naturally fitted for one task, and another for another. Don't you think so?" "I do."" (*Rep*. 370a–b).
[195] Aristotle, *Pol*. I, 2. 1253a10.

means that one has to become a part of a culturally and historically defined nexus of meanings, which give this relation its specific form. This idea of pre-established framework as the condition of political space is implied also in the Greek notion of "law", *nomos*, which referred to the idea of "delimitation" or "demarcation" (*nemein*) as the fundamental precondition of political life. It is particularly through law that I encounter the fellow human being as familiar or strange, equal or non-equal – for instance, as a citizen or slave, a Hellene or Barbarian. To reiterate Arendt's argument, the Greeks conceived *nomos* as a pre-political category, which provided the general framework within which political action *per se* becomes possible. Rather than constituting the basic content of the political debate (as in the case of modern societies), laws were compared with the surrounding walls of *polis*, which endowed the individual participants with their basic immunity.[196]

Husserl approached the relationship between philosophy and politics at least from two different angles. First of all, the cultural formation of philosophy emerged in a relation to a specific political context of the Greek city-states, which were not only hostile towards one another but also internally divided. Plato's work was affected especially by the political turmoil following the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens, which had abolished the democratic regime of Athens and replaced it with the rule of the so-called Thirty Tyrants. Although the Spartan tyranny came into an end around the turn of the 5th and 4th century BC, the situation was not considerably better for philosophy: after being accused of impiety and corrupting the youth, Socrates was sentenced to death around 399 BC by the democratic regime of Athens. Plato's own political odyssey ended in a catastrophe: after an unfortunate confrontation with Dionysios I, the tyrant of Syracuse, Plato himself was sold into slavery and was saved only by his generous admirer. As Plato put it in the *Republic*, "for so cruel is the condition of the better sort [i.e. philosophers] in relation to the *polis* that there is no single thing like it in nature"[197] – philosophy emerged against the backdrop of a highly explosive political context, whose general structure Husserl often sketched under the opposition of conservatism and progressivism:

[196] Arendt 1958: 63–64.
[197] Plato, *Rep*. 488a.

> Clearly this [the birth of philosophical community] leads not simply to a homogeneous transformation of the generally satisfactory life of the national state but probably to great internal schisms in which this life and the whole national culture suffer an upheaval. Those conservatives who are satisfied with the tradition and the philosophical men will fight each other, and the struggle will surely occur in the sphere of political power. The persecutions begin at the very beginnings of philosophy.[198]

This idea of conflict provides us with the second constituent in the relation between philosophy and politics. Besides emerging within a particular societal context, *philosophy also articulated itself in terms of a political project*, which placed itself in opposition to the tradition. Indeed, had philosophy lacked this political dimension, there would have been no need for a conflict with the existing structures of power. Through the emergence of the theoretical attitude, philosophy delineated a novel idea of the *polis* and its respective societal institutions, more precisely, a new idea of the very constitution of the political sphere.[199] It did this, first of all, by relocating what I previously called the motive of "deterritorialization" (3.2) within the political domain: what philosophy criticized was exactly the very idea of delimitation as the constitutive principle of the *polis*. Secondly, by transferring the idea of "infinite task" (3.3) to the domain of the *polis*, philosophy opened up a new temporal horizon of the political sphere. What Husserl called a new form of "political historicity" (*politische Geschichtlichkeit*)[200] entailed a new relation to the tradition, but it was also able to nurture a novel idea on the future prospects of a political community – a new form of political utopianism. Together they contributed to the emergence of a distinctive set of normative ideals that concerned not only the individual,

[198] "Offenbar führt das nicht einfach zu einer homogenen Verwandlung des normalen, im ganzen befriedigenden staatlichnationalen Lebens, sondern mit Wahrscheinlichkeit zu großen inneren Spaltungen, in denen dasselbe und das Ganze der nationalen Kultur in einen Umbruch hineingerät. Die in der Tradition konservativ Befriedigten und der philosophische Menschenkreis werden einander bekämpfen, und sicherlich wird der Kampf sich in der politischen Machtsphäre abspielen. Schon in den Anfängen der Philosophie beginnt die Verfolgung." HuaVI: 334–335.

[199] To follow the distinction made by Claude Lefort, Husserl's analyses moved on the level of *le politique* – the conditions of the political sphere, the way how society represents itself as a totality to itself – as distinct from the day-to-day affairs of la politique, common real politics. See Lefort 1989: 216. Cf. Depraz 1995: 3.

[200] HuaXXIX: 15

but the social body as a whole – hence, what they opened up was the domain of *social ethics* as a unique field of study.

As I would like to argue, the single most important idea that Husserl ascribed to the political philosophy of the Greeks was the birth of *political universalism*. In accordance with the idea of universal reason and pure idealities as the domain of universal truths, Greek philosophy formulated an ideal of universal communal existence that could be conceived free of any empirical constraints, for instance, without any reference to a particular group of people. By questioning the absolute authority of the city-state as the "natural" or "conventional" form of political organization, philosophy broke out of the immanence of the Greek political tradition, and laid out a novel idea of community that was critical towards all conventional attempts to demarcate the political sphere in advance. Thus by releasing the political sphere from its empirical contours, philosophy was able to trigger off a novel form of *political idealism* that distinguished itself from all typical day-to-day political projects.

As I already pointed out in the Introduction, Husserl designated the history of European universalism under the title of "spectacle of Europeanization" (*Schauspiel der Europäisierung*).[201] What he meant by this enigmatic term was the phenomenon we perhaps know better as the complex and multifaceted process of "globalization" – the dissolution of traditional national and ethnic borders through intellectual and commercial interchange. Although this development can be traced back to the third millennium BC, it is usually defined by referring to its "European" origins, that is, to the period of the so-called "archaic globalization" of the Hellenic era and the consecutive expansions of the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church. In the late manuscript "Human Life in Historicity", Husserl emphasized the expansionist strategy of the Roman Empire as the first concrete instantiation of Europeanization, which, as he concluded, was as much a "Hellenization through Hellenic philosophy".[202] In the context of *Kaizo* essays dealing with the religious history of Europe, a similar idea was illuminated through the Augustinian notion of *civitas dei* – conceived as the first instantiation of a cosmopolitan community.[203] Husserl, of course, was

[201] HuaVI: 14.
[202] HuaXXIX: 16.
[203] HuaXXVII: 60–71.

no historian and his narrative was a rather conventional one, and it focused on the tripartite *arche*-teleology of Athens, Jerusalem and Rome. His interest was, above all, in the general structure of this development, in what he called the motive of "rational internationality" (*rational Internationalität*) that unfolded in the course of European political history.[204]

This is not to say, however, that we should simply adhere to Husserl's description of political universalism as a form of "rational internationality". From the Roman Empire to the Christian crusades, the overcoming of national and political borders has relied on an uneven balance of power, and it has led to the emergence of several other frontiers – ethnic, political, and economical. Instead of "rational" intercultural exchange, we have witnessed the destructive leveling of many unique cultural features – and the emergence of a new monoculturalism: in the name of Western or European universalism, it is often assumed that everyone should take on the path of universal human rights, liberal democracy, market economy, and so on.

As I would like to read it, however, Husserl's idea of political universalism was as much a promise as it was an existing history. In contrast to the violent and unilateral history of European universalism, this process hid within itself an "absolute sense" that was to be distinguished from its "historical non-sense" (cf. Introduction).[205] In its "absolute sense", Husserl argued, Europeanization was a prospect of a political community that would go beyond the traditional ideas of nation and state, an idea of community inherently critical towards all pre-established limits of culture or ethnicity. Motivated by the generative transformation in the categories of "homeworld" and "alienworld", philosophy aimed at articulating a novel idea of political communality that was inherently critical towards all natural divisions of familiarity and strangeness. For Husserl, the essential transitivity and contingency of these divisions was indeed the most important lesson of the political history of Europe:

> Yet this essential difference between homeliness and alienness (*Heimatlichkeit und Fremdheit*), a fundamental category of all historicity which relativizes itself in many strata, cannot suffice. Historical humankind does not always divide itself up in the same

[204] HuaXXIX: 16.
[205] HuaVI:14

> way in accord with this category. We feel this precisely in our own Europe. There is something unique here that is recognized in us by all other human groups, too, something that, quite apart from all considerations of utility, becomes a motive for them to Europeanize themselves even in their unbroken will to spiritual self-preservation [...].[206]

Husserl's argument was of course a controversial one. However, it contained within itself an implicit critique towards one of the dominant theoretical frameworks of political philosophy of the Weimar period. This framework was articulated first by Carl Schmitt's *Das Begriff des Politischen* (1927), which saw the division between "friend" and "enemy" as the primal constitutive principle of the political sphere – as the eternal, "a priori" order of the political domain (although the concrete enmity-image was to be conceived as transient).[207] Husserl did not deny the constitutive significance of otherness in the political regard – the political history of Europe is also that of enmity-image so that what we understand with Europe varies whether it is defined in relation to Ottomans or Islamists (13th century onwards) or the new rising superpowers of the 21st century. What Husserl claimed was that what we discover in the political history of Europe, above all, in the philosophical attempts to rearticulate the conditions of political community – is the urge to rethink the constitutive significance of the other, to form a new relation to the category of alienness as such. Thus, to adhere to Schmitt's conception on the *a priori* constitutive significance of the other is to strike at the roots of that tradition of political idealism, which has aimed at dismantling this difference as such.

It should be noted here, however, that this reading of Husserl as a "universalist cosmopolitan" is somewhat selective in the sense that it takes Husserl's mature views as the primal point of departure and disregards

[206] "Indessen dieser sich in vielen Stufen relativierende Wesensunterschied von Heimatlichkeit und Fremdheit, eine Grundkategorie aller Geschichtlichkeit, kann nicht genügen. Die historische Menschheit gliedert sich nicht in immerfort gleicher Weise gemäß dieser Kategorie. Wir erspüren das gerade an unserem Europa. Es liegt darin etwas Einzigartiges, das auch allen anderen Menschheitsgruppen an uns empfindlich ist als etwas, das, abgesehen von allen Erwägungen der Nützlichkeit, ein Motiv für sie wird, sich im ungebrochenen Willen zu geistiger Selbsterhaltung doch immer zu europäisieren [...]." HuaVI: 320.
[207] Schmitt 1987: 27. See also Waldenfels 1997: 45.

some of his earlier views on the centrality of the nation-state. As Karl Schuhmann has shown in his *Husserls Staatsphilosophie*, for Husserl the state was a rather ambiguous notion that could be used in affirmative as well as pejorative sense. For instance, in a letter to Roman Ingarden in 1917, Husserl apologized for the hostile relations between Germany and Poland and attested that "*sub specie aeterni* both nations have an ideal right for existence."[208] In terms of political institutions, Husserl's political reflections seemed to balance between Fichtean nationalism (especially during the First World War), Kantian republicanism (beginning of the 1920s), and what almost seems like a mixture of Stoic cosmopolitanism and socialist internationalism: in *Kaizo* essays, the ideals of *Übervolk* and *Übernation* were introduced in connection to a "communistic unity of will" as distinct from unjust and unilateral imperialism.[209]

In the context of this work, however, I will restrict myself to Husserl's encounter with the political dimension of Greek philosophy. I do this not in order to dismiss the varieties of European universalism, but in order to discuss what I consider as the most crucial philosophical questions in Husserl's account of Europe in regard to the problems of social ontology.

Again, the most important point of departure for Husserl's interpretation on the political dimension of Greek philosophy was Plato. As I already indicated, from the beginning of the 1920s Husserl's reading of Plato went through what I called a "genetic conversion" whereby the shift of focus moved from mere epistemological issues to questions concerning scientific practice at large, its character and teleological structure – but also questions of practical philosophy, of culture, communality and their normative ideals. Beginning from the period of *Kaizo* essays as well as the 1923 lecture course *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl began to credit Plato as the "establisher of the idea of social reason" who was the first to conceive "*social ethics* as the full and true ethics"[210]. Despite the occasional mythical guise of Plato's social and communal philosophy, Husserl wanted to avoid the interpretation according to which the "personalistic" features

[208] Husserl 1968: 6.
[209] HuaXXVII: 53n1
[210] HuaVII: 16.

of community would only entail a metaphoric significance. "The Platonic analogy of community and individual should not be understood an inventive coincidence of natural thinking", Husserl emphasized, "but as an expression of the common apperception mounting from the actuality of human existence."[211] At the beginning of 1930s, when Husserl was planning a larger book based on the lectures that were later published as *Cartesian Meditations*, he even entertained his own idea of philosopher's engagement as the "phenomenological restitution of the Platonic theory of state".[212]

Read against the lectures of ethics of 1920/24, it seems that this restitution was inseparable from Husserl's conscious distanciation from the basic presuppositions of the modern liberal thought. Against the Hobbesian idea of politics founded on "war of all against all" – what Husserl called "the one-sided construction" of a purely "egoistically founded sociality"[213] – Husserl still believed in the idea of "ethical politics"[214] that would acknowledge the educative function political institutions as well the idea of state as the framework of moral elevation. Husserl wanted to restore the lost unity of political thought and virtue that had been lost by the modern tradition of political philosophy, most notably, the liberalist tradition. As I already pointed out in the first part of this work, what Galileo had done to nature by depriving it of its teleological character, liberalism had done the same in respect to the idea of human being: by naturalizing the human psyche, this tradition had evaded the possibility of a "teleology of reason" that would have delineated the possibility of human progress in history. For the liberal tradition, political institutions – above all, the state – remained primarily preventative measures for the avoidance of conflicts, what we might call a static idea of political sovereignty that gained its

[211] "Diese Analogie ist aber keineswegs ein geistreicher Einfall eines das natürliche Denken hoch übersteigenden oder gar verstiegenen Philosophen, sondern ist nicht mehr als der Ausdruck einer alltäglichen, aus den Aktualitäten des menschlichen Lebens natürlich erwachsenden Apperzeption." HuaXXVII: 5.

[212] "Der Philosoph als „transzendentaler Funktionär" hat die Möglichkeit der höchsten Echtheit, seine Verpflichtung als Vorbild: phänomenologische Restitution des platonischen Staatsgedankens." HuaXV: XL

[213] HuaXXXVII: 49, 55ff.

[214] HuaXV: 380.

justification through the task of guardianship.[215] Husserl did not contest the justification of state institutions – in this respect, as he told his son Gerhart, his phenomenology was completely apolitical[216] – but aimed at developing a critical method of examination from the viewpoint of philosophical rationality. As Fink put it, phenomenology could not be used to defend the "humanitarian ideal of democracy" nor could be simply targeted against "the fascist doctrine attacking the idea of humanity". "The whole setting of the problem", wrote Fink, "leads into the other side of the political struggle, the battle for the philosophical meaning of human being."[217]

How, then, did the theoretical attitude execute itself in the political sphere? The Greek political thought took its point of departure from the idea that a certain form of political rule cannot simply take its authority from the tradition, nor can it insist on the natural relation between a particular people and a form of governance. Instead, all forms of governance – democracy, aristocracy, monarchy, and so on – should be exposed to an all-embracing critique, which does not acknowledge tradition or convention as the authority of a particular political system. As Plato put it in the *Republic*, the philosophers "will take the *polis* and the characters of men, as they might a tablet, and first wipe it clean", for "this would be their first point of difference from ordinary reformers, that they would refuse to take in hand either individual or state or to legislate before they either received a clean slate or themselves made it clean."[218] As a result of this peculiar political *epoche*, Plato articulated the principle of "presuppositionlessness" as the fundamental premise of political philosophy, thus releasing the idea of *polis* from all typical empirical contours. In other words, what Plato advocated was a notion of *ideal politics*, which was able to pose the question of good life and righteous governance free from the constraints of *Realpolitik*.

[215] It was only Kant who in his essay on perpetual peace raised the possibility of situating the state to the overall framework of world-historical teleology: the state, for Kant, was the first safeguard of public law, but it was also the framework which made the idea of *civitas gentium*, the "world-state". Despite their immense differences, Husserl accentuated the alliance of Kantian and Greek political thinking in their insistence to locate the idea of political universalism in connection to an "all-embracing people" (*Übervolk*). See HuaXXVII: 58

[216] See Husserl's letter in Schuhmann 1988: 18–19.

[217] This passage is quoted in HuaXXIX: xx

[218] Plato, *Rep*. 501a.

This conflict between these two types of political discourse – the "ordinary" and the "philosophical" – became perceptible in the wake of the Classical era. In *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Diogenes Laertius tells a story about Anaxagoras, the first thinker who brought philosophy from Ionia to Athens, who was known of his devotion to natural philosophy while disregarding the day-to-day political affairs. Being accused of the negligence for politics and the lack of affection to his own county, Anaxagoras replied to his adversaries (according to Diogenes):

> "Be silent," said he, "for I have the greatest affection for my country," pointing up to heaven.[219]

What we find in these examples in the form of utmost political idealism is nothing less than the principle of self-responsibility relocated in the political sphere. In contrast to what Plato calls the "ordinary reformers" who realistically assess the implementability of political ideas in relation to existing conditions, philosophers start from the scratch: they need to construct their political ideals without any reference to a particular political *doxa*. For Husserl, it was exactly this feature that constituted the fundamental philosophical dimension of Greek political thinking. The imminent consequence of the Platonic ideal of state, writes Husserl, was "that there is an absolute norm of reason not just for any *polis*, but for the whole of humanity that stands in the unity of culture-creative communal relations."[220] Against the political ethos of the Classical period, which accentuated the role of particular deities as the foundation of *polis*, the philosophical critique introduced an idea of universal justification that could be applied to the political domain as such – though in reality, its application was significantly restricted. Nevertheless, what this transition laid out was basically the principle of *autonomy* as the foundation of the political sphere; an idea of *polis* as self-regulating domain which gives its own laws to itself.

[219] Diogenes Laertius *D.L.* II.7.ii

[220] "Denn die naturgemäße Konsequenz seines entworfenen Staatsideals ist es, daß nicht nur für irgendeine Polis, sondern für die ganze in Einheit kulturschaffender Gemeinschaftsbeziehungen stehende Menschheit eine absolute Norm der Vernunft bestehe, daß sie sich, wenn sie zu einer wahren und echten Menschheit werden soll, organisieren muß zu einer von autonomer Vernunft und der Vernunft in der objektivierten Form echter universaler Philosophie geleiteten Menschheit." HuaXXVII: 87. As Depraz points out, Husserl also speaks of a "universal ethical *epoche*" (1995: 11, cf. HuaVIII: 319), which she reads in terms of an acquiring of a non-ideological standpoint for a political community.

Accordingly, the emergence of philosophy signified a transition from the mere natural origin of the *polis* to the idea of an actively instituted foundation. In accordance with the split between culture and tradition – philosophy as a creation of meaning free of the burden of the past – Husserl conceived the Greek idea of political justification in terms of a transition from "*natura* to *recta ratio*" – from nature to "right reason".[221] The idea of *recta ratio* (sometimes translated as "pure reason") was central especially to the intellectual tradition of Roman law, which linked the notion of natural law to the idea of universal rationality. "We must explain the nature of law", argued Cicero in *De legibus*, "and that needs to be looked for in human nature"[222] – and indeed the only "law" (*lex*) that philosophers must confine themselves into is that of *recta ratio*.[223] As such, this notion can be traced back already to *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle defines "virtue" (*aretē*) not in terms of a natural quality, but a "disposition determined by the right reason (*orthon logon*)"[224]. What constitutes the ultimate authority of virtuous action is neither "tradition" nor simply "human nature", but the common faculty of *logos* and its ability to decide on just and unjust behavior. The mere "voice" (*fonē*), says Aristotle elsewhere, "can indicate pain and pleasure", but it is only *logos* that "is designed to indicate the advantageous and the harmful, and therefore also the right and the wrong."[225] *Logos*, which for humans is the way to overcome the brute existence of animals, founds the philosophical idea of *polis*.

What this transition entailed was a series of transformations in the basic concepts of political and social sphere – what Husserl called a "regeneration of people's lives" (*Umbildung des Volkslebens*).[226] By relocating the basic framework of political ontology from nature to reason, the

[221] "The natural law in original sense the mere legal practice, the traditionally acquired habit that is *kathēkon* ["appropriate behavior"] is transformed, or it places itself as a new kind of norm as opposite to the law which binds all human rationality – all people of all nations." ("Es deutet sich an in der Verwandlung des Sinnes von natura zu recta ratio. Das natürliche Recht (z.B.) im ursprünglichen Sinne, die blosse Rechtssitte, das traditional Gewohnheitsmässige, das *kathekon* ist, verwandelt sich oder stellt sich als neuartige Norm gegenüber dem Recht, das <für> alle menschliche Vernunft – das für alle Menschen aller Nationen bindend <ist>." HuaXXIX: 15.

[222] Cicero, *De leg.* I.17

[223] Cicero, *De leg*. I.18

[224] Aristotle *E.N.* 1144b28

[225] Aristotle, *Pol*. I.1253a11–15

[226] HuaXXIX: 16.

Classical period witnessed a series of attempts to articulate anew many of the basic concepts of the political domain, including the concepts of "justice", "equality", the "division of power" etc. One of central disputes that emerged during this period concerned perhaps the most important (as well as the most controversial) concept of the political domain, that is, the concept of "people". Especially through the critique of the early sophists, what was meant by "a people" could no longer be characterized simply in terms of a natural quality, but rather, as a way of relating to a common life-world, a tradition. As the orator *Isocrates* put it in the work *Panegyricuus:*

> And so far has our city distanced the rest of mankind in thought and in speech that her pupils have become the teachers of the rest of the world; and she has brought it about that the name Hellenes suggests no longer a race (*genous*) but discursive reasoning (*dianoias*), and that the title Hellenes is applied rather to those who share our culture (*paideuseos*, "education") than to those who share a common nature (*fyseos*).[227]

What Isocrates argued was that what we mean by a people (e.g., the Hellenes) cannot be reduced back to a particular empirical attribute – race or a natural origin – but what we might designate as a "transcendental" feature, that is, the common faculty of dianoia, "discursive reasoning". This is not to say, however, that all human beings would live in a universal political community; as Isocrates puts it, no man is a Hellene "by nature", but only by becoming a part of the common "culture" or "civilization", which serves as the foundation for the political domain. What this argument does is that it relativizes the relation between individual and community, and locates it in the domain of rationality and culture. To put it in Heraclitean terms: Greeks are not those who share a common bloodline, but those who share a common world.

Here, I think, Husserl's own historical narrative turned out to be somewhat ambiguous. To say that for the Greeks, the natural law was conceived as a universal category that "binds all human rationality, all people of all nations"[228] is not simply wrong, however, it is not completely compatible with the philosophical ethos of the Classical period. As many prominent scholars have shown, the idea of universal rationality

[227] Isocrates, *Panegyricuus* fr. 50. Cf. Davis 1951: 131ff.
[228] HuaXXIX: 15

as the foundation of political space was most prominent in the writings of the sophists; for Plato and Aristotle, the division between Hellenes and Barbarians (like that between men and women) was still conceived as a natural one.[229] This stance explains why in Meno, Plato made the distinction between two types of wars (polemos): the intra-Greek one, that ought to be conducted with minimal force and damage, and the one against Barbarians that ought to result in complete annihilation.[230] In Politics, likewise, Aristotle conceived Barbarians as "natural slaves" who should be ruled by the Hellenes – thus dismissing the idea of natural freedom of individual subjects.[231] To look for a developed theory on the universal foundation of a political community, we ought to look at the political writings of the Stoics and of Early Christianity – as I will argue in the last part of this work, Husserl's ethical ideal of community is actually best understood as a rendition of Christian ideals.

For Greek philosophy, however, nature (*fysis*) was by no means a simple category. Actually, the problematic relation between *polis* and *fysis* forms one of the key issues of their political thinking. Aristotle, for one, conceived the relation between "state" and "nature" in two opposite regards. In the first book of *Politics*, Aristotle argued that because the history of human civilization has been that of concentration to common settlements, "the city-state (*polis*) is a natural growth (*fysei*), and that man is by nature a political animal." Therefore, a man without a city "is either low in the scale of humanity or above it,"[232] that is, either an animal or God. However, because of the ineluctable multitude of personalities that characterizes all political communities, the unity of *polis* is really not an "outcome of nature" – and "what has been said to be the greatest good [i.e. the multitude of citizens] in states really destroys them."[233] In order to reconcile the multitude of citizens' interests, *polis* needs to recur to power and coercion – it needs to institute a legal framework, which can protect the autonomy of individual citizens. The *polis* is, according to this account, both natural as well as artificial.

[229] Cf. Schmitt & Vogt 2005: 194–196.
[230] Plato, *Meno* 242a–c.
[231] Aristotle, *Pol*. I. 1252b.
[232] Aristotle, *Pol*. I. 1253a.
[233] Aristotle, *Pol*. II. 1261b6.

It should be noted that the Greek understanding of nature – especially of human nature – differed significantly from our modern understanding. Nature was conceived not as a mechanistically structured field of causal relations but as a teleological process in which different entities strive for their own essence. As Aristotle put it, "nature is an end (*telos*), since that which each thing is when its growth is completed we speak of as being the nature of each thing, for instance of a man, a horse, a household"[234]. In this regard, *fysis* was simply just another name for the right "essence" (*eidos*) conceived as the full realization (*energeia*) of the inherent possibilities of a being. As a category of human existence, nature did not signify mere "facticity" or a life guided by drives and instincts but a teleological category in the light of which the whole existence of man ought to be regarded.[235] Nature was, above all, an ideal which provided the basic normative criteria for each thing, "the object for which a thing exists, its end, [its] chief good."[236]

In Plato's own thinking, this ambiguous character of human nature came to serve as the central motive of his political philosophy – one, that was used to justify and eradicate the existence of political power. This contradictory pursuit can be enlightened by considering the difficult relation between human nature and law (*nomos*). As Plato put it in the *Laws*, "no man's nature is naturally able both to perceive what is of benefit to the civic life of men and, perceiving it, to be alike able and willing to practice what is best" – we are, in our typical condition, self-seeking and prone to egocentrism. However, as he continues:

> Yet if ever there should arise a man competent by nature and by a birthright of divine grace to assume such an office, he would have no need of rulers over him; for no law or ordinance is mightier than knowledge, nor is it right for reason to be subject or in thrall

[234] Aristotle, *Pol*. I. 1252b33–35

[235] The normative and teleological character of human existence comes forth also in the well-known passage of *Nicomachean Ethics:* "Nor ought we to obey those who enjoin that a man should have man's thoughts and a mortal the thoughts of mortality, but we ought so far as possible to achieve immortality, and do all that man may to live in accordance with the highest thing in him; for though this be small in bulk, in power and value it far surpasses all the rest. […] That which is best and most pleasant for each creature is that which is proper to the nature of each; accordingly the life of the intellect is the best and the pleasantest life, for man, inasmuch as the intellect more than anything else is man; therefore this life will be the happiest". *E.N.* 1177b31–1178a8

[236] Aristotle, *Phys*. 1252b34–35.

> to anything, but to be lord of all things, if it is really true to its name and free in its inner nature. But at present such a nature exists nowhere at all, except in small degree; wherefore we must choose what is second best, namely, ordinance and law (*taxin te kai nomon*), which see and discern the general principle, but are unable to see every instance in detail.[237]

Political institutions are needed because the common man does not "naturally" meet the teleological ideal of rationality as the self-responsible, autonomous application of the law. For this reason, the *polis* of mortals acquires only the status of the "second best" (*deuterōs* [...] *pros to beltiston*)[238] in comparison to the city-state of fully rational subjects who could basically do away with politics in the usual sense. In this case, there would be no need for coercion and law as forces that are external to the individual, for the principle of ordinance would be realized by each and every individual personally. For Plato, the politics of the best possible as the communal realization of (philosophical) rationality would entail, at the same time, the *end of politics*: a life of fully harmonious community.

As I already pointed out, Husserl's insistence in his return to Plato was motivated by the central role Plato gave to *social ethics* as the "genuine" or "full" sense of ethics, or more generally, to normative ideals. What this formulation may suggest is that for Husserl, the great insight of Plato consisted of his "communitarian" ethos that could be read as opposite to the "individualistic" tradition of modern liberalism. However, this is not exactly what Husserl had in mind. For him, the genuine insight of Platonic ethics consisted neither of its individualistic nor its communitarian ethos, but rather, of their peculiar intertwinement. For Husserl, *Plato was a thinker of the inextricable communion of individual and social ethics*, that is, a philosopher of the individual-within-the-community. What Plato understood was that without the social-communal dimension of ethics, all normativity remains fundamentally abstract, for it is only the community that can fully make possible the righteous behavior of the individual. This idea, however, is only possible through the vocational striving of the individual – the Socratic ideal – which is the fundament, though not the final truth, concerning the good life. As Husserl put it in one of his *Kaizo* essays, "all

[237] Plato, *Laws*, 875b–c.
[238] Plato, *Laws*, 793a.

genuine culture is possible only through a genuine culture of self and its norm-giving ethical framework"[239] – however, as a mere individual praxis, it is bound to remain abstract.

I was would like to argue, it is exactly the Greek notion of the "political" that provides us the possibility of capturing Husserl's insistence on the peculiar intertwinement of individual and social ethics. In *Gorgias*, Plato presents us with a striking comparison between two different "arts" (*technai*) through which a human being is nurtured – one concerning the body, the other the soul (*psychē*). While the body is trained through the practices of medicine and gymnastics, "the one, which has to do with the soul", Socrates says, "I call politics" (tēn men epi tē psychē politikēn kalō).[240] Parallel to the "inner" and "outer" techniques of gymnastics and medicine, Socrates then goes on to divide the domain of politics into "legislation" (*nomothetikos*) and "righteousness" (*dikaiosynē*): by making itself good laws, a *polis* can sustain itself in good form, and while confronting problems with its own health, it can resolve these only through just decisions.

What is exceptionally striking here, however, is the clear link that Plato makes between the "care of the soul" and politics – a connection that has been extensively discussed by Jan Patočka.[241] Rather than constituting two distinct domains, the philosophical attitude reveals itself as political *through and through*. Because the philosopher strives at viewing the world from the perspective of a "disinterested onlooker", s/he is at least in principle free of all particular interests and concerns. The social or communal aspect is thus implied within the philosopher's gaze, the perspective of whosoever: this is what Socrates means as he claims that in his own time, he is the only one "involved in the true art of politics" (*epikheirein tē hōs alēthōs politikē tekhnē*).[242]

What about righteousness? Is it a public or a private virtue? Let us consider the second book of *Republic* where Plato first approaches the question of righteousness in terms of an individual attribute. While the "seat" of righteousness is to be originally located within the individual hu-

[239] "Denn alle echte Kultur ist nur durch echte Selbstkultur und in ihrem normgebenden ethischen Rahmen möglich". HuaXXVII: 42.
[240] Plato, *Gorgias*, 464b.
[241] See esp. Patočka 2002: 71ff.
[242] Plato, *Gorgias*, 521d. A similar train of thought can be discovered in Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics*, where Aristotle makes a distinction between "true politicians" and people who are involved in politics. (*E.E.* 1216a23–27).

man being, this insight turns out to be abstract, for it fails to take into account the role of education in the formation of normative ideals. A good polis produces good and righteous citizens: for this reason, Plato proceeds to argue that *dikaiosyne* can actually exist in both "one man" as well as in the whole of *polis*.[243] Actually, righteousness can only be studied through this correlation of the individual and the communal dimensions, by "examining them side by side and rubbing them against one another, as it were from the fire-sticks we may cause the spark of righteousness to flash forth".[244] What we have in this poetic image of philosophical dialectics is basically the "paradox of subjectivity" conceived in ethical terms: we are, at the same time, beings-in-the-world and beings-for-the-world. While we arrive at the ethical dimension of the communal life only through ourselves, we are constantly conditioned by the former – we are both the subject as well as the object of culture. The individual and community are, as Husserl puts it, "a priori indistinguishable".[245]

Another way of articulating this connection is to focus on the notions of legislation and governance (*politeia*) in the IX book of the *Republic*. Here, the starting point was basically the same as that of the modern liberal tradition: that legislation and governance are needed in order to defend the basic immunity of citizens – the law is what Plato calls the "protector" (*symmakhos*) of all citizens.[246] However, good governance is not to be located merely in the domain of political institutions, but also within the individual human being: the man of intelligence, says Socrates, will "keep his eyes fixed on the governance in his soul (*pros tēn en hautō politeian*), and taking care and watching lest he disturb anything there either by excess or deficiency of wealth."[247] In the best possible scenario, the righteous behavior is not imposed on the individual from the outside, but rather, it is lived as the coherence of one's "inner politics". As John Sallis puts it, the Platonic polis in the book IX, "is a city within man [...] not primarily in the sense that he [Socrates] has educated a ruler for the fatherland but rather in the *sense* that in and through his speech he has founded a city

[243] Plato, *Rep*. 368e
[244] Plato, *Rep*. 435a
[245] HuaXXVII: 6.
[246] Plato, *Rep*. 590e. As Aristotle put it, the "rule of law" is better than that of a single person. *See Pol*. III.16.1287a
[247] Plato, *Rep*. 591e.

within Glaucon [Socrates' interlocutor]."[248] This city exists, Plato claims, only in the domain of *logos* and not on earth:

> "I understand," he said; "you mean the city whose establishment we have described, the city whose home is in discourse (*logoi*); for I think that it can be found nowhere on earth." "Well," said I, "perhaps there is a pattern of it laid up in heaven for him who wishes to contemplate it and so beholding to constitute himself its citizen. *But it makes no difference whether it exists now or ever will come into being*. The politics of this city only will be his and of none other."[249]

Thus, the idea of good governance exists in two regards: first, it emerges within the political institutions as the result of a concrete political praxis that can be exposed to philosophical critique. Moreover, it also exists in each and every single human being as the ideal of rational life in general. "I believe in the revival of pure idealism thirsted by the youth", Husserl wrote to Ingarden, "and I hope that it will be introduced into the relation of the inner and external politics of the practical reason."[250] This, for Husserl, constituted the genuine radicalism of Greek political ontology: righteousness can only flourish as the harmony of the two.

Accordingly, from the viewpoint of political ontology, the birth of philosophy nurtured what we might call the *utopian motive of Greek political thinking* – the determination of ethical and political life according to the unattainable idea of "perfect life". As the idea of infinite horizon is acknowledged within the individual and the communal domains, their respective ideas of what it means to be "a good person" or "a good community" undergo a radical transformation.[251] The prevailing humanity and society become understood as essentially incomplete formations with regard to their ideal norms, that is, as something whose true meaning must be attained through constant critique and renewal. Like the full sense of knowledge, they become infinite ideas that can only be gradually ap-

[248] Sallis 1986: 454.
[249] Plato, *Rep*. 592a-b. My italics.
[250] "Ich glaube an den Aufschwung des reinen Idealismus, nach dem die Jugend lechzt, und hoffe, daß er in die Verhältnisse innerer und äußerer Politik praktische Vernunft hineinbringen werde". Husserl 1968: 11.
[251] As Socrates says to Phaedrus, one should attribute the title "wise" (*sophos*) only to God, whereas human beings are merely worthy of being referred to as "lovers of wisdom" (*philosophos*) in the sense of God-like spectators (*Phaedrus*, 278d). This idea is developed also by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, X.7 1177b31–1178a8.

proached but never completely reached. In practical life, they become normatively binding ideas that obliges us to do "the best possible" both individually and collectively.

In concrete reality, however, politics is not merely about ideals – it is also a domain where the use of power is contested. If we take that the ideal of political community was formulated in connection to the teleological ideal of human existence striving towards perfection, what does it really mean in terms of political power? What kind of political constitution or division of power corresponds with the ideal *politeia*?

To follow Klaus Held's argument, it was perhaps the idea of *democracy* that constituted the most salient political legacy of the Greek ideal of universal rationality. This term, which can of course denote many different things, was first used during the 5th and 4th century BC to denote the political systems of some Greek city-states, most notably, Athens. In its most general form, democracy was a form of governance that, as Pericles tells us, granted the power in the hands of the many rather than the few.[252] At least in the reflections of the great orators, the political principles of the city-states reflected the idea of the universal and egalitarian notion of reason: the conviction that when it comes to public matters, every (free) man is essentially equal and entitled to address the matters at hand from his or her particular horizon. According to Held's view, democracy founded itself on the "new world-openness characterized by the complementary relation of the unity of the world and the multiplicity of horizons, which is based upon inaugural philosophical-scientific thinking."[253] This pluralistic equality, Held points out, was reflected in the two most important features of Greek democracy: *isonomia*, the equality before the law and *isēgoria*, the freedom of speech (sometimes referred to as *parrhēsia*). Together they contributed to what Greeks considered the basic principle of political life, namely: *eleuthereia* – often translated as liberty, but means something like autonomy – the will to live according to one's own conscience.[254]

We should not, however, present too idealized picture of the Greek political reality. Athens was no liberal democracy; it granted few basic

[252] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.34–2.46.
[253] Held 2002: 94.
[254] *Pol*. VI.2. 1317bff..

human rights to its citizens, and it excluded both women and slaves from the status of citizenship and consequently, the deliberative processes of democratic order. "The power of the people" was a highly unstable system that in many occasions was guided by short-sighted "real politics". This constitutes the basic weakness in Karl Popper's argument concerning the totalitarian ethos of Greek political thinking: it is well arguable that the very motivation of Plato's political philosophy was to nurture the spirit of free critique and "freedom of speech" – something that the allegedly democratic Athens *denied* of Socrates as he was convicted on rejecting the gods as well as corrupting the youth.[255] In its corrupted form, democracy was an adversary of universal *logos*, free discourse that was supposed to nurture the very idea of politics as a sphere of constant rebirth and renewal.

Still, Held's argument on the imminent relation between scientific philosophy and democracy – albeit highly suggestive – seems to contradict with the explicitly anti-democratic ethos of Greek political philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle neglected democracy as an inauthentic political form, because it seemed to lack a kind of inner coherence as well as a sense of purpose: what Plato criticized in the *Republic* as the democratic type of man was a person who spends his/her time on sporadic desires, "indulging the appetite of the day, wine-bibbing and abandoning himself to the lascivious pleasing of the flute, and again drinking only water and dieting; and at one time exercising his body, and sometimes idling and neglecting all things, and at another time seeming to occupy himself with philosophy."[256] Following Arendt's view, the political philosophy of the Classical period was not able to tolerate the multiplicity of *doxai* as a political category – the fundamental conflictuality of Greek political life – but had to suffocate it under the guidance of philosopher's vision.[257] By taking its point of departure from one truth rather than the multiplicity of opinions, Greek political thought replaced "political action" by "governance", which for Arendt, signified nothing less than the closure of the political space as such.

The controversial solution to the problem of philosophical *politeia*, which became Husserl's primary point of departure as well as the main

[255] Popper 1962: 87, passim.
[256] Plato, *Rep*. 561c-d
[257] Arendt 1958: 16ff.; 1993: 227ff.

target of criticism, was provided by Plato's *Republic*; first, in the form of tripartite theory of the soul and its corresponding theory of three classes (book IV), and secondly, in the allegories of The Ship (book VI) and The Cave (book VII), and lastly, in the mythological constellations referred to as "noble lies" (*gennaion pseudos*), i.e., the myth of the metals dividing the souls of different classes (book III). What these theories aimed at was simply the basic thesis Plato presents in book V, namely, that in the genuinely ethical state "either philosophers become kings [...] or those whom we now call our kings and rulers take to the pursuit of philosophy seriously and adequately."[258] This basic framework of body politic, which we discussed already in part 1 in relation to the idea of crisis, was used to answer the basic question of Plato's political ontology, namely, the division between "the rulers and the ruled" (*arkhousi te kai arkhontai*).[259] For Plato, this question resulted in the necessity of placing philosophy as the head of the state: so that as Plato puts it, it is actually nature which commands philosophy to "govern" (*hēgemoneuein*) the affairs of the *polis*.[260]

In Husserl's later works, there are several passages that seem to merely corroborate Plato's vision of the "hegemonic" and "archontic" role of philosophy. In *Erste Philosophie*, for instance, Husserl located Plato's great insight to his vision according to which "science is called to acquire the role of *hēgemonikon* [the governing reason] of all communal life and therefore the whole of culture."[261] In the *Vienna Lecture*, the same idea was confirmed through philosophy's role as the "archontic for the civilization as a whole."[262] The Platonic vision of body politic was completed in Husserl's delineation of philosophers as the "operating brain" whose "healthy functioning" was essential to the present-day European humanity.[263] Thus in Arendt's definition, Husserl would fall victim of the ultimate fallacy of Western political thinking: the closure of the political domain, the suf-

[258] Plato, *Rep*. 473c–d. Cf. 499b: ("For this cause and foreseeing this, we then despite our fears declared under compulsion of the truth that neither city nor polity nor man either will ever be perfected until some chance compels this uncorrupted remnant of philosophers, who now bear the stigma of uselessness, to take charge of the state whether they wish it or not, and constrains the citizens to obey them, or else until by some divine inspiration a genuine passion for true philosophy takes possession.")
[259] Plato, *Rep*. 412b
[260] *Rep*. 474c
[261] HuaVIII: 15
[262] HuaVI: 336
[263] HuaVI: 336

focation of its multiplicity under the guidance of the philosopher-king.

Husserl's conclusion, however, was more subtle. As Schuhmann and Held point out, within the Husserlian ideal of a body politic there is no place for a sovereign philosopher-king, for this would contradict with the very idea of rationality: we can never give up on our personal responsibility.[264] Rather, it is exactly the ideas of self-critique and self-responsibility that ought to *emanate from philosophy* to other branches of culture. The ideal of a self-regulating and autonomous community is sometimes characterized by Husserl as that of a "healthy" (*gesund*) or vital (*lebendig*) culture, which we might read along with proverb *mens sana in corpora sano*.[265] If the essential "*habitus* of critique"[266] that philosophy is supposed to nurture is lost, then it has grave consequences for the whole of body politic. Community "loses its head": is no longer able to articulate those conditions on the basis of which a common purpose could be formed. For according to Husserl, philosophy was supposed to be the very caretaker of reason,

> [...] the spiritual *organ*, in which the community establishes the consciousness of its true definition (its true self), and they are also called to be the *organ* for the *reproduction* of this consciousness among the "laypeople".[267]

The societal function of philosophy does not consist of informing individuals on "what to do" or "how to live"; rather, its task is that of *motivation*, the constant calling forth of critical self-inspection (cf. the Platonic *logon didonai*). This does not mean, however, that philosophy would execute its genuine task through coercion nor does it do away with political conflicts. As we saw in the beginning of this chapter, philosophy itself emerged as a result of a particular societal juxtaposition, which was no stranger to Husserl's own phenomenological project. Husserl's delineation of rationality was first and foremost a formal one, and it concerned primarily the conditions of justification on the basis of which a conflict of values,

[264] Schuhmann 1988: 141, 163ff.; Held 1989a: 154.
[265] HuaVIII: 242, HuaXXVII: 4. See also discussion on Fichte and cultural sickness in HuaXXV: 282–284.
[266] HuaXXVII: 64
[267] The full quote: "Die Philosophen sind die berufenen Repräsentanten des Geistes der Vernunft, das geistige Organ, in dem die Gemeinschaft ursprünglich und fortdauernd zum Bewußtsein ihrer wahren Bestimmung (ihres wahren Selbst) kommt, und das berufene Organ für die Fortpflanzung dieses Bewußtseins in die Kreise der Laien." (HuaXXVII: 54)

for instance, can manifest itself. Without even a minimal appreciation of a shared rationality (what Hegel called "recognition") all political debate is doomed to remain mere rhetorical practice, persuasion or intimidation on emotional grounds.

Let us return to the question of Europeanization. It seems that what Husserl understood as the "absolute sense" of this development, the ideal form of political universalism, was derived as a kind of analogy of the community of philosophers within the political domain. For him, the genuine "vocation" of the European culture coincided with philosophy, the spiritual organ of humanity:

> This means nothing less than that we grant to European culture […] not just the highest position relative to all historical cultures but rather we see in it the first *realization of an absolute norm of development*, one that is called to the task of revolutionizing all other cultures in the process of development.[268]

According to Derrida, Husserl's later reflections on Europe have been defined by what he calls the "logic of exemplarity": the privileged position of Europe among world-historical cultures as the *good example*. Although Derrida formulates his criticism in several of his works – from the early works on Husserl's genesis to the later reflections on the state of Europe (*L'autre cap*) – the content of this criticism has remained the same in essence: "Europe has always confused its image, its face […] with a heading for world civilization or human culture in general."[269] Against this logic, Derrida argues, "it is necessary to make ourselves the guardians of an idea of Europe, of a difference of Europe, but of a Europe that consists precisely in not closing itself off in its own identity and in advancing itself in an exemplary way toward what it is not, toward the other heading or the heading of the other."[270]

Derrida's criticism, I believe, has its own justification. As I would like to argue, however, what characterized Husserl's return to the Greek idea of political universalism was exactly his insistence to create a kind of counter-strategy to the modern tradition of substantial universalism.

[268] "Das meint nichts minderes, als daß wir der europäischen Kultur […] nicht nur die relativ höchste Stellung unter allen historischen Kulturen zubilligen, sondern daß wir in ihr die erste Verwirklichung einer absoluten Entwicklungsnorm sehen, die dazu berufen ist, jede andere sich entwickelnde Kultur zu revolutionieren." HuaXXVII: 73

[269] Derrida 1992: 24

[270] Derrida 1992: 29.

Rather than presenting us what could be called a *universalised particularism* – the assumed universal applicability of certain particular dogmas as in the case of modern theories of natural law – the Greek universalism provided us with a counter-motive, namely, *the de-absolutization of all particularisms* pointing towards a non-substantial account of culture. What Husserl considered the key insight of Plato's political considerations was exactly the idea that the "absolute norm" of cultural development cannot be derived from culture itself – European or non-European – rather, it was to be located in the structure of human rationality as such. This is not to say that what we mean by rational would be completely free from the constraints of culture, quite the contrary: reason is always defined in relation to a particular teleology or genealogy, endowing it with what Husserl called the "powers of historical reality".[271] As a teleological form, this idea of universalism derives its justification from the critique of all "exemplarities", from the renouncement of the absolute authority of tradition.

It is exactly here that the Greek political ontology comes at its limits. Despite Husserl's insistence on the teleological-idealist character of Greek political philosophy, what this tradition was unable to articulate was the concept of teleology as a genuine historical principle, caught between the transcendental dimension of all-embracing historicity and its empirical realization. What Plato and Aristotle still lacked was the motive of perpetual self-critique and renewal that ought to be introduced in order to fully appreciate the dynamism of historical development. As I will argue in the last section of this work, this idea can only be enlightened by considering Husserl's own analyses on *historical teleology*. As I will show in the last part of this work, the political utopianism implied in Husserl's conception of teleology is best understood as a critical praxis targeted at the present moment, unveiling the latent crises of meaning constituted through the "historical" paradox of subjectivity – we are both the subject as well as the object of history.

[271] HuaXXVII: 106

—IV—

Teleology, Historicity, Communality: Phenomenology and Universalism

It is a characteristically modern experience that what we understand by culture is not merely what is present or past but *what is yet to come*. Modernity signifies the twofold expansion of historical time, or, as I argued in the first part of this work, the very temporalization of history *per se*. For the modern age, history no longer denotes a mere account dealing with past events but the opening up of a new temporal consciousness, which understands the present moment on the basis of a twofold horizon of past and future. Above all, modernity is that period which, as Koselleck puts it, distinguishes between "experience" and "expectation".[1] What we understand by history can no longer be defined in terms of past facts but an eschatological expectation, which endows the present moment with its peculiar future horizon.

The target of this expectation, the *eschaton*, is of course reason itself. To say that modernity signifies the process through which reason breaks out of its theological shackles is of course true – however, it is likewise true that *modernity needs history in order to secure the triumph of reason as its inevitable outcome*. As Kant put it in his essay on the idea of universal history, because it is difficult to assume any kind of shared purpose in the "senseless course of human affairs", the philosopher must set out to find "a history with a definite natural plan for creatures who have no plan of their own."[2] In other words, while the progress of reason does not necessarily

[1] On the distinction between "space of experience" (*Erfahrungsraum*) and "horizon of expectation" (*Erwartungshorizont*), see Koselleck 1983: 267–288.

[2] "Es ist hier keine Auskunft für den Philosophen, als daß, da er bei Menschen und ihrem Spiele im Großen gar keine vernünftige eigene Absicht voraussetzen kann, er versuche, ob er nicht eine Naturabsicht in diesem widersinnigen Gange menschlicher Dinge entdecken könne; aus welcher von Geschöpfen, die ohne eigenen Plan verfahren, dennoch eine Geschichte nach einem bestimmten Plane der Natur möglich sei." Kant, Akad.-A VIII: 18.

show itself in the common affairs of human beings, it must be discovered as the hidden logic of the world. This explains why Kant could speak of philosophers as the "secret agents" of world-history tracing the hidden *telos* of history behind the crust of empirical events, or, why Hegel could speak of "secret revolutions" preceding the actual and often violent revolutions of the political sphere.[3]

As I argued in part 1.2, we are familiar with this idea by the name of *historical teleology*. Modernity is the epoch that understands itself from the viewpoint of an end, a *telos*, as the ever-closer imminence of this end. "If we give up this fundamental principle [of teleology]," writes Kant, "we no longer have a lawful but an aimless course of nature, and blind chance takes the place of the guiding thread of reason."[4] Without the idea of an end, all historical development and change appear as coincidental as the arbitrary events of nature: rain showers, the blowing of the wind, the collision of tectonic plates. At the same time, modernity evolves as the very struggle concerning "the end of history", the concrete *telos* or *eschaton* of the world-historical teleology. From Kant's cosmopolitan community to Hegel's bourgeoisie state, from Marx's communism to Fukuyama's liberal-democratic capitalism, the historical thinking of modernity has emerged as a conflict concerning the ending point of history, which would bring its progress to completion.[5] Although these thinkers had fairly different views on the dialectic of history and where it would come to its end, they all agreed on one basic presupposition: history is on the side of *reason* and *freedom*, and their union will ultimately be secured through political institutions.

It is well known, however, that a significant part of contemporary philosophy has taken a critical stance towards this idea. To follow Jean-François Lyotard's definition, what we mean by *postmodern condition* is exactly the situation where the grand narratives of history have lost their credibility – where the modern faith in historical progress has lost

[3] Hegel, GW 1: 203.

[4] "Denn wenn wir von jenem Grundsatze abgehen, so haben wir nicht mehr eine gesetzmäßige, sondern eine zwecklos spielende Natur; und das trostlose Ungefähr tritt an die Stelle des Leitfadens der Vernunft." Kant, Akad.-A VIII: 18.

[5] It should be noted that for Marx, the process of modernity, which would have ended in the demise of the capitalist market-economy was not to be conceived in terms of "end of history" but instead, as the end of prehistory. Despite this terminological variation, I take their teleological concepts as similar.

its force.[6] Although this incredulity towards grand narratives (or meta-narratives) can be traced back already to Nietzsche's denouncement of modernity ("Progress is just a modern idea, which is to say a false idea"[7]), it was not until the latter half of the twentieth-century that this idea really established itself as a significant constituent of our scientific worldview. From Nietzsche's perspectivism to Derridean deconstruction, from Kuhn's paradigm-shifts to Foucault's genealogy, a significant part of contemporary philosophy has defined itself in contrast to the modern ideas of historical progress and universal teleology. Against the cumulative and linear idea of historical development – and the possibility of locating a common origin of different generative traditions – these stances have argued for the incommensurability of different cultural, historical, social, and scientific frameworks. The contemporary social sciences that have modeled themselves on the basis of natural sciences have likewise criticized the idea of human progress as relying on naïve assumptions of philosophical-political idealism – ideas that have failed to appreciate the unchangeable (and most often violent) character of human nature. Especially to those social scientists who have labeled themselves as political realists (or neo-realists), the idea of historical teleology has appeared outright speculative, and therefore unjustifiable. Following Carl Schmitt, our political realism thinks that "all genuine political theories presuppose man to be evil"[8] – following E.H. Carr, it has treated "utopianism" as the only possible alternative of Machiavellianism.[9]

These critiques, although they diverge from one another, seem to underline the basic physicalist assumption of our modern world-view, namely, that on the level of *real being*, change can only occur through causal mechanisms, and all talk about pre-established ends yields to a kind of metaphysical prejudice on the divine course of things. This is to say that for contemporary philosophical and scientific world-view, the only way to think teleology is to conceive it in terms of an "objective" state of affairs – a divine plan that somehow guides the course of the world. Teleology entails *theology* in the sense that it clings on to blind faith or expectation. It is exactly for this reason that both Walter Benjamin and Derrida found

[6] Lyotard 1979: 1ff.
[7] See Ch. 1.2.
[8] Schmitt 1987: 57, 61ff..
[9] On the "exuberance of utopianism", see Carr 2001: 10ff.

the language of "Messianism" to be so compelling while describing the fundamental presupposition of modern historical consciousness according to which we are constantly waiting to be saved from the injustices of this world. Although both of them recognized a certain emancipatory potential in this presupposition (i.e. a radical break is needed in order for freedom and justice to come about) and tried to reformulate this idea either as "weak Messianism"[10] (Benjamin) or "Messianic without Messianism"[11] (Derrida), they seemed to leave the basic sense of teleology intact.

While I do not wish to simply denounce the often idiosyncratic language of post-modernism and post-structuralism, I believe it highlights some of the general difficulties in our relation to historical concepts.[12] To claim that we have exhausted the possibility of grand narratives, that we are giving up on Kantian–Hegelian idea of humanity's development through reason, or, that we are renouncing the Marxist narrative concerning the universal expansion of capitalist market-economy – does this not also undermine the critical and reflexive potential of our present situation? To say that philosophical, political and societal critique on the basis of an all-encompassing, universal history is impossible seems to imply that we cannot really learn from history, or, that all learning fastens upon bad examples, and the best we can do is to replace a certain set of historical presuppositions with another. As Fredric Jameson asks in *A Singular Modernity*, is not the "end of grand narratives" itself another grand narrative?[13] For as already Marx and Engles noted in *The German Ideology*, all dominating ideologies incorporate within themselves an "illusion of self-sufficiency", by which they appear has "having no history".[14] It is the common feature of all dominating ideologies that they work towards the extinction of their own genesis, for instance, by blotting out the mechanisms of violence and oppression that have produced the existing societal conditions. For this reason, historical narratives are needed in order to escape the seeming constancy of the present moment – in order to show its dependency and relativity in regard to the past.

[10] Benjamin 2002: 401ff.
[11] Cf. Derrida 1994:180–181; 2008: 213ff.
[12] On the relation between phenomenological teleology and post-structuralism, see Steinbock 1998c.
[13] Jameson 2002: 5.
[14] Marx/Engels 1970: 47.

It is exactly here, I believe, that Husserlian phenomenology points towards a radically different possibility of thinking the ideas of teleology and progress. It is my argument that Husserl's later analyses on generativity and historicity provide us with an idea of historical teleology, which not only resists the modern interpretation on the course of history, but which radically challenges the deterministic and unilineal implications of this notion. For Husserl, teleology was to be understood as a fundamentally *critical device of philosophical reflection*, which executes itself on the basis of what I would like to call a historical *epoché*, i.e., a specific "bracketing" of all particular commitments concerning the course of history. It was exactly this renewed understanding of historical teleology, which made possible an unprejudiced and undogmatic approach to historical development. Instead of arguing for the rationality and inevitability of history, this idea was to serve as the fundamental point of departure for a *responsible* and *responsive* idea of universalism.

In the first chapter of this part (4.1), I will start by discussing the implications of Husserl's teleological-historical approach in regard to the problematic of Europe. As I will show, Husserl's late emphasis on the inextricably historical character of phenomenology was to be understood in regard to a broadened notion of self-understanding and responsibility, motivated especially by the genetic dimension of meaning-constitution. Against his earlier idea on the presuppositionlessness of phenomenological research, Husserl, in the late stage of his career, reformulated his position in order to acknowledge the necessary historical situatedness of his phenomenology. This led him to articulate a new idea on the fundamental connectedness of the historical and the systematic approaches. The historical-teleological reflections were to be conceived in connection to the idea of radical responsibility, which has its horizon in the totality of one's historical preconceptions. In other words, this new historical reflection was to serve the "liberation" of the phenomenologist from the yoke of the present moment. By converting the idea of teleology into a category of historical reflection which necessarily proceeds from the present moment, Husserl extended the phenomenological epoché to concern the particular commitments of our historical consciousness, i.e., the particular narratives on the righteous or unjust character of historical development.

Phenomenology, in this regard, remained committed to the modern idea of universal historical teleology. However, this teleology was to be divested of its empirical illusions. Teleology, according to this account, could only be articulated on the basis of the present moment, as a critical tool which constantly calls for a rearticulation of historical development on the basis of this presence.

As I will argue in the second chapter (4.2), it was exactly this renewed understanding of teleology that came to serve as the fundamental point of departure for Husserl's account of the cultural transformations of philosophy – transformations of which Europe served as the primary example. Instead of arguing for the purely ideal or transcendental character of the spiritual history of Europe, Husserl articulated this idea with regard to a twofold division between transcendental and empirical genesis, as a specific transformation within the structure of the transcendental genesis. In accordance with the infinitely open horizon of philosophical undertaking, phenomenology opened up a novel idea of ethical reflection that realizes itself through the interplay between the two types of ideals, the absolute and the relative. Although Husserl emphasized the essentially relative character of ethical considerations – our acts and deeds are always in a necessary relation to our personal history and our acquired capacities – he nevertheless maintained that our ethical striving should execute itself on the basis of an all-encompassing horizon of absolute ideals. It is only on the basis of this inexhaustible absoluteness that we are able to discover the inevitable and necessary one-sidedness of our thinking. It is exactly this insight, I argue, that provides us with a novel understanding of the possibility of progress as a phenomenological category. Instead of denoting a category of being or history as such, progress was to be conceived as a category of the *will* or *practical reason*. Far from denoting any kind of "optimism" or "pessimism" on how things will turn out to be, the idea of progress was to point towards the essentially future-oriented character of teleological-historical reflections: a genuine progress is possible only on the basis of a universal horizon of historical development. Through this renewed understanding on the generative and historical implications of the phenomenological attitude, Husserl was able to point towards a radically intersubjective character of philosophy and genuine social ethics: philosophy, although it necessitates the absolute self-responsibility

of the individual, finds its genuine teleological essence only within the intergenerational process of meaning-constitution. Alongside with the past, philosophy was to be understood as a *radical responsibility for the coming community*: I must strive to make others free as well.

These ideas provide us with a transition to Husserl's own normative ideal of community. As I will argue in chapter 4.3, Husserl aimed at articulating this ideal on the basis of his overall framework of generativity and historicity, i.e., as a necessarily intersubjective and temporal idea of communal co-operation, which necessarily involves a relation to the cultural-political institutions of a particular homeworld. Although Husserl's reflections fluctuated between the state-oriented and non-statist approaches to the question of the ethical ideal, I believe his reflections are best understood in terms of a search for a proper criterion of legitimacy in regard to political institutions. Instead of fixing phenomenology into a particular conception of the political domain (e.g. a concept of state, justice), Husserl aimed at providing a novel idea of political reflection and renewal on the basis of the dialectic between absolute and relative ideals. Against the classical traditions of political idealism and realism, Husserl's thinking provides us with a novel understanding of political imagination as an essentially transient and context-situated form of thinking – a "dynamic" utopianism.

In chapter 4.4, I will focus on one of Husserl's most ambiguous characterizations for his normative ideal of community: the community of love (*Liebesgemeinschaft*). It is my argument that with the help of this notion, Husserl formulated the most interesting and compelling solution to the problem of ethical universalism – a solution that aimed at the practical affirmation of the original "intertwining" of human subjects (as presented in part 2). Instead of merely founding itself on the "axiological asymmetry" characteristic of the development of generativity, the concept of love pointed towards a radical deconstruction of this asymmetry for the sake of an intersubjective co-existence and co-dependency. In this venture, I suggest, Husserl's thinking actually went beyond the conceptual framework of Greek philosophy and its understanding of political idealism. Instead of the political universalism characteristic of Greek political thought – i.e., universal extent of political institutions – Husserl's analyses are best understood in regard to a particular continuation of this thought,

the Pauline (or Christian) idea of universalism. Instead of defining itself in relation to the classical concepts of *erōs* or *filia*, I believe that Husserl's idea of love is best understood in terms of Christian *agapē*, which, instead of sublating the difference between individual subjects, aimed at the affirmation of their unique identity-in-difference.

This enables us to account for the specific form of universalism that was on the horizon of Husserl's reflections on Europe. Instead of an idea of a substantial or third-party universalism (e.g. human rights, political institutions), Husserl's phenomenological considerations on the structure of transcendental intersubjectivity provide us with a renewed understanding of universalism as a fundamental calling of reason, one, which necessarily involves a critical and reflexive stance towards the generative traditions of individual cultures, both own as well as foreign. Instead of a position that could be acquired once and for all, this idea of universalism is understandable only as a perpetual movement – as an infinite task – which has its horizon in the open community of subjects.

4.1 Teleology and Liberation: Phenomenology of Presuppositions

As we have already observed, the idea of historical teleology constituted one of the central topics of Husserl's reflections on Europe, and this at least in two senses. First, what linked Husserl to the overall tradition of modern philosophy was his insistence that the genuine understanding of culture needs to realize itself in a teleological form, that is, it needs to be made understandable through its development towards certain "ends" and "purposes". As Husserl put it in one of his late texts, the whole cultural world is essentially *tradition* – a "passing forward" of different accomplishments in the course of worldly time – that is given to certain subjects at a certain period of time as an essentially incomplete formation.[15] This incompleteness becomes manifest, first of all, on the level of givenness: tradition provides us with meanings that are at least par-

[15] "Die gesamte Kulturwelt ist nach allen ihren Gestalten aus Tradition da." (HuaVI: 366)

tially empty and call for their reactivation in lively intuition. Further, they are also incomplete in another sense, namely, as goals that point towards their future development. To put it more succinctly, culture is essentially *inheritance*: it appoints its subjects as heirs, as someone who are requested or obliged to carry on certain accomplishments, practices, values and so on. We can discover purpose in history not because it is guided by a divine plan but because the passing-forward of culture is itself purposeful, that is, teleological.

Second, what Husserl considered the birth of the European humanity through the breakthrough of Greek philosophy was not to be conceived in terms of specific cultural accomplishments, but it also signified the *birth of a new kind of teleological horizon*. As I already indicated in the previous part of this work, Husserl delineated this horizon under the notion of *infinite task*. While opening up the sphere of ideal accomplishments free of any empirical contours, philosophy gave birth to a class of completely new goals that are always only partially achievable in concrete action. By operating as kinds of ideal poles, these goals opened up a wholly new domain of universal historicity that could not be exhausted in the course of worldly time. While the original site for this motive was the sphere of scientific truths, it was also articulated in social-communal terms: philosophy delineated a new form of political idealism that does not merely resign to the clout of the present but aims at rearticulating the conditions of the ideal political domain.

Although several scholars have appreciated the critical pretension of Husserl's late teleological-historical reflections, these reflections also have a reputation of being both monolithic as well as Eurocentric. Paul de Man, for one, has argued that while "Husserl was demonstrating the urgent philosophical necessity of putting the privileged European standpoint into question," he "remained himself entirely blind to this necessity, behaving in the most unphilosophical way possible at the very moment when he rightly understood the primacy of philosophical over empirical knowledge."[16] According to de Man, Husserl never questioned the progressive narrative of European history proceeding from Greco-Roman world to modernity, nor did he contest the belief in the "supremacy" of his

[16] de Man 1983: 16.

own European standpoint.[17] Instead, the historical reflections of Husserl served merely the purpose of justification of the present moment – i.e., the Hegelian idea according to which historical development is both rational and inevitable – and thus lacking a critical potential. However, if we seriously consider the basic motivation of Husserl's teleological-historical standpoint, we may find the possibility of counter-criticism:

> Here the point of departure is: we, who carry out the universal consideration of persons, drawing into it the universal consideration of the surrounding world, etc., are ourselves human beings, Europeans. We ourselves have developed historically; as historians we ourselves create world history and world science in every sense, a historical cultural structure within the motivation of the European history in which we are situated. The world which is for us is itself a historical structure belonging to us, who are ourselves in our being a historical structure.[18]

> Every spiritual shape exists essentially within a universal historical space or in a particular unity of historical time according to coexistence and succession, i.e., it has its history (*Geschichte*). So if we pursue the historical interconnections, beginning, as is necessary, with ourselves and our nation, the historical continuity leads us further and further from our nation to neighboring nations, and thus from nation to nation, from one time to the next.[19]

As Husserl emphasizes, the certain privilege that the European narrative employed in his historical reflections was not motivated by the superiority of this historical current. Rather, because our present situation is

[17] "Why this geographical expansion should have chosen to stop," de Man writes, "once and forever, at the Atlantic Ocean and at the Caucasus, Husserl does not say." (de Man 1983: 15).

[18] „Hierbei der Ansatzpunkt: Wir, die wir universale personale Betrachtung durchführen, in sie universale Betrachtung der Umwelt etc. einbeziehen, sind selbst Menschen, europäische Menschen, sind selbst historisch geworden, wir erzeugen selbst als Historiker Welthistorie und Weltwissenschaft jedes Sinnes, ein historisches Kulturgebilde in der Motivation der europäischen Geschichte, in der wir stehen. Die Welt, die für uns ist, ist selbst ein historisches Gebilde von uns, die wir selbst nach unserem Sein ein historisches Gebilde sind." HuaVI: 313.

[19] "Jede geistige Gestalt steht wesensmäßig in einem universalen historischen Raum oder in einer besonderen Einheit historischer Zeit nach Koexistenz und Sukzession, sie hat ihre Geschichte. Gehen wir also den historischen Zusammenhängen nach, und, wie es notwendig ist, von uns und unserer Nation aus, so führt uns die historische Kontinuität immer weiter von unserer zu Nachbarnationen und so von Nationen zu Nationen, von Zeiten zu Zeiten." HuaVI: 319. My italics.

itself permeated by objectivities and accomplishments that have originated through the philosophical, cultural, and scientific tradition of the West – e.g., Greek philosophy, Judeo-Christian values, and the worldview of modern natural sciences – a genuinely responsible stance must take its point of departure not from the tradition of the alien but from our own preconceptions. Thus, teleology is not an "objective" state of affairs conceived from a third-person perspective, but it is essentially something that effectuates itself through the first-person perspective. We ourselves, as Husserl puts it, are "the bearers" of teleology "who take part in carrying it out through our personal intentions."[20] In this regard, as Steinbock notes, Husserl's idea of teleology can also be understood according to his recurring use of the term *Stamm* – i.e., stem, root, or genealogical lineage – referring not to an idea of absolute foundation but to the process of "origin-originating", which transforms its character in different historical phases.[21] The cultural present, as Husserl puts it, "implies" (*impliziert*) within itself the whole of the cultural past[22] –teleology can only be approached from the perspective of the present.

For Husserl's phenomenology, accordingly, teleology did not entail a mere descriptive sense but also a normative potency. To say that our historical present is teleological means, first of all, that it is not absolute; it is a product of a certain generative development that endows the present moment with its unique character, its specific normativity. That we are beings, who have been handed down with a scientific worldview, a form of market economy and social welfare, or the possibilities of telecommunication, is not an ahistorical fact but a result of a certain historical process. Our possibilities of action are dependent on the past: in this respect, the teleological horizon was the fundamental premise of genuine social ethics, which does not take the present state of affairs merely as something given, but as a result of a particular historical development. Present is only what it is on the basis of the past – but the present also has the tendency

[20] "[…] als ihre [die Teleologie] Träger, in unserer persönlichen Willentlichkeit ihre Mitvollzieher." HuaVI: 71. **See also HuaIX: 254 where Husserl defines transcendental subjectivity itself as "teleological through and through".**

[21] See Steinbock 1995: 194ff.; 1998c: 160.

[22] „[…] die gesamte Kulturgegenwart, als Totalität verstanden, „impliziert" die gesamte Kulturvergangenheit in einer unbestimmten, aber strukturell bestimmten Allgemeinheit." HuaVI: 379.

of concealing this dependency.[23]. It is an inherent tendency of cultural objectivity to disguise its own teleological history, to present itself as static, if not eternal, truth. This is also what Husserl means when in *Crisis*, he speaks of the "spell" (*Bann*) of present times[24] – in order to break out from the presence-centeredness of the natural attitude, the seeming naturality of this presence must be challenged.

Philosophy, however, had a somewhat more complex relation to its historicity. Especially in Husserl's early analyses, philosophy seemed to fall outside teleological considerations because of its essentially ahistorical character: it deals with a domain of truth that is fundamentally unchangeable. As Husserl argued in his early text on philosophy as rigorous science, while the history of philosophy might work as an "inspiration" for philosophers of the present, it does not really provide any concrete assistance in the strenuous work of systematic philosophical reflections. "It is not through philosophies that we become philosophers", Husserl wrote – and the efforts of arriving to the genuine sense of philosophy via historical reflections lead to nothing but "hopeless efforts".[25] Because every philosopher must take full responsibility of his or her own labor, the historicity of philosophy presents itself also as a hindrance, as a warehouse of false problems.

In the existing Husserl-scholarship, the historical and the non-historical accounts are most often discussed in terms of different "ways" or "paths" to phenomenology (or to reduction). According to Iso Kern, in Husserl's works we can distinguish between three types of approaches: first, the Cartesian, which basically corresponds with the ego-centric transcendental analysis that begins with *Ideas*; second, the way through intentional psychology, which deals with the inherent structure of mental phenomena without any reference to physical reality; and thirdly, the way of ontology, which roughly corresponds with the way of lifeworld taken in *Crisis* (although according to Kern, Husserl takes this way already in his earlier writings such as *The Idea of Phenomenology*, 1907).[26] As Kern

[23] See HuaMatVIII: 436. Cf. Ch 2.1
[24] HuaVI: 59.
[25] "Aber zu Philosophen werden wir nicht durch Philosophien. Am Historischen hängenbleiben, sich daran in historisch-kritischer Betätigung zu schaffen machen und in eklektischer Verarbeitung oder in anachronistischer Renaissance philosophische Wissenschaft erreichen zu wollen: das gibt nur hoffnungslose Versuche." (HuaXXV: 61)
[26] Kern 1977: 126ff.

rightfully observes, Husserl's last works represent a transition from the Cartesian way to that of ontology (or the lifeworld), which was motivated by Husserl's need to tackle the critique on the implicit solipsism of the Cartesian way, as well as his insistence of providing a constitutive function to intersubjectivity. Without the ontological way, phenomenology seemed to be unable to answer questions concerning the objectivity of the world, but also the questions concerning its historical and cultural relativity. As Husserl put it in a late manuscript:

> We shall see that this lifeworld is nothing but the historical world. From here, it becomes conceivable that a complete systematic introduction into phenomenology begins and is to be carried through as a universal historical problem. If one introduces the *epoché* without the historic framing, then the problem of the lifeworld, i.e., of universal history, remains unsolved. The introduction in *Ideas* does in fact retain its right, but I now consider the historical way to be more principal and systematic.[27]

Why is the historical way more principal and systematic? Because it corresponds with the idea of philosophy as a *teleological notion*. That philosophy develops also as a historical process whose absolute sense is never given in its totality; that philosophy, too, denotes an open horizon of development that can never be exhausted by a single description; that the sense of philosophy lies in infinity – these characteristics point towards an idea of philosophy whose genuine sense can only be worked out through a teleological-historical reflection. Philosophy means responsibility of *grounds* – the grounds of experience, of knowledge, of the world – but this responsibility must always understand itself on the basis of the generative background of philosophy as a whole. "Philosophy," wrote Husserl, "is nothing other than [rationalism] through and through." But this rationalism, he argues, is "differentiated within itself according to the different stages of the movement of intention and fulfillment; it is *ratio* in the constant movement

[27] "Wir werden sehen, dass diese Lebenswelt (allzeitlich genommen) nichts anderes ist als die historische Welt. Es ist von da aus fühlbar, dass eine vollständig systematische Einleitung, die in die Phänomenologie (einführt), als ein universales historisches Problem anfangt und durchzuführen ist. Wenn man die Epoche einführt ohne die geschichtliche Thematik, so kommt das Problem der Lebenswelt bzw. der universalen Geschichte hinten nach. Die Einleitung der *Ideen* behält zwar ihr Recht, aber ich halte den geschichtlichen Weg jetzt für prinzipieller und systematischer." HuaXXIX: 426

of self-elucidation (*Selbsterhellung*)."[28] Descartes, Kant and Hegel reached towards the ultimate grounds each in their unique way, but they did so on the basis of their unique philosophical situations. In this regard, the "primal establishments" of modern philosophy (Descartes) or genuine transcendental philosophy (Kant) were actually what Husserl calls "novel establishments" (*Neustiftungen*), i.e., beginnings that are relative in regard to the original primal establishment of philosophy *per se*.[29] The point of teleological reflection is exactly to uncover this historical logic of primal and secondary/novel establishments, which forms the genuine "inner historicity" (*Innengeschichtlichkeit*) of philosophy.[30]

In Husserl's late manuscripts, we find this transition expressed also in terms of novel relation to the idea of "presuppositions" (*Voraussetzungen*). Recall that since the publication of *Logical Investigations*, Husserl had considered the principle of presuppositionlessness (*Voraussetzungslosigkeit*) as the fundamental and necessary point of departure of pure phenomenology.[31] What Husserl meant by this concept was basically the idea that all of our epistemological concepts must derive their legitimacy straight from the experience in which they are given, and that we should resist all metaphysical assumptions and speculations concerning the true character of being and experience. Following the idea of the principle of principles (cf. Ch. 1.4), phenomenology was to be *undogmatic*: it was to turn its gaze away from not only the realist presuppositions of the natural attitude but also the traditionally sedimented problems of philosophy.

Here, Husserl's later works took on a somewhat different direction. While he still held on to the idea of phenomenological reduction as the "bracketing" of the natural attitude, he began to treat the "historical presuppositions" of philosophy as something that necessarily accompany the critical-reflexive position. "Without reflecting the totality of our preconceptions", Husserl wrote, "there is no philosophy, no science of the final and genuine responsibility."[32] As the reflections concerning the Greek

[28] "So ist Philosophie nichts anderes als <Rationalismus>, durch und durch, aber nach den verschiedenen Stufen der Bewegung von Intention und Erfüllung in sich unterschiedener Rationalismus, die ratio in der ständigen Bewegung der Selbsterhellung […]" (HuaVI: 273).
[29] HuaXXIX: 420.
[30] HuaXXIX: 417.
[31] HuaXIX/1: 24.
[32] "Ohne die Besinnung über die Totalitat der Voraussetzungen ist ja keine Philosophie -

philosophy had shown, both Plato and Aristotle conceived the birth of philosophy as something that is essentially tied with the reflexive stance towards the generative background of one's present situation. Plato's critique of myth as well as Aristotle's comparative account of previous thinkers pointed towards a "positive" account of historical presuppositions – we become philosophers not only by simply abstaining from the traditionally given conceptions, but by discovering their essential finitude and one-sidedness.

Indeed, it seems that in Husserl's later works, the early rigid division between the historical and the systematic begun to falter: as Husserl wrote in a late manuscript, to the over-all sense of transcendental phenomenology "belongs *the* intertwining (*Ineinander*) of historical investigations and the systematic investigations they [the historical] motivate, arranged from the start according to that peculiar sort of reflexivity through which alone the selfreflection of the philosopher can function."[33] Nobody begins at a clean slate: we become philosophers by working out our historical presuppositions.

This idea makes understandable the claim Husserl makes in *Crisis*, namely, that the teleological reflections aim at *liberation* (*Befreiung*).[34] Instead of the "negative" idea of liberation of Husserl's earlier works – freedom *from* historical presuppositions – Husserl's later works pointed towards a "positive" concept of liberation through historical reflection. We become free in our thinking only by acquiring the greatest possible variety of different truths, approaches, and possible standpoints, which provide us with an insight into the "historical movement" of this world – its successes and failures, its necessary one-sidedness – in which philosophy unfolds as a

keine Wissenschaft aus letzter und wirklicher Verantwortung da." HuaXXIX: 415. On the critique of "phenomenological reduction in the first volume of *Ideas*, see HuaXXIX: 399, 424–426.

[33] "Zu diesem ihrem Gesamtsinn gehört das Ineinander von historischer und durch sie motivierter systematischer Untersuchung, von vornherein angelegt in der eigentümlichen Reflexivität, in der sich die Selbstbesinnungdes Philosophen allein bewegen kann" (HuaVI: 364, translation modified)

[34] Cf. HuaVI: 60: "[…] our expositions are supposed to aid understanding only from the relative [perspective of our] position and that our expression of doubts, given in the criticisms [of Galileo, etc.] (doubts which we, living in the present, now carrying out our reflections, do not conceal), has the methodical function of preparing ideas and methods which will gradually take shape in us as results of our reflection and will serve to liberate us (*zu unserer Befreiung dienen sollen*)."

common task.[35] It is only through a comprehensive account of the past that one is able to surmount the compelling necessity of the present moment, namely, the idea that philosophical reflection always remains tied to the present moment, to the present conceptuality and its presuppositions.

We can perhaps now observe why Husserl's idea of teleology distinguished itself, sharply and distinctively, from its Hegelian predecessor. As I argued in the first part of this work, for Hegel the teleological idea of culture was employed primarily in order to account for overarching rationality of historical development. Through the idea of "cunning of reason" (*List der Vernunft*), Hegel was able to show how even the seemingly irrational or unjust deeds and events contribute to the necessary development of spirit and consequently to the progress of human freedom. As Hegel put it at the end of his lectures on world-history, "philosophy concerns itself only with the glory of the idea mirroring itself in the history of the world,"[36] so that ultimately, the "transcendental" ideal of spirit and the "empirical" history of the world are reconciled. "This is the true *Theodicy*," writes Hegel, "[…] that what has happened, and is happening every day, is not only not 'without God', but is essentially his work."[37] Here, it is exactly the universal teleology of the world that *justifies* the present moment as the indispensable result of spirit's progression.

It is my conviction that here the Husserlian teleology was based on a different approach. For Husserl, the teleological horizon of the past was not called upon in order to justify the present as a result of a necessary development, but instead, *in order to demand a creative transformation on the present state of affairs*. For Husserl, teleology became ultimately a *critical requisite* of philosophical thinking that does not merely confine itself to the present moment and its factical accomplishments but aims at showing their necessary finitude and incompleteness in regard to the infinite horizon of philosophy. Teleological reflection is indispensable, because we are "not yet" at the end of history, or, to be more precise: because we constantly think we are.

The phenomenological concept of teleology, accordingly, resists all forms of historical determinism. That certain ideas necessitate the existence of others – or that certain cultural objects can be created only on the

[35] HuaXXIX: 397.
[36] Hegel 1988: 457.
[37] Ibid.

basis of certain material and intellectual conditions – means that the development of culture adheres to a certain teleological pattern. It is exactly here that history has its own "a priori" – not in the sense of a pre-established harmony but as necessary relations of foundation, that can only be discovered on the basis of those accomplishments that have been handed down to us. As Husserl emphasizes, this a priori is never a "novel" (*Roman*) but always an interpretation.[38] Following the depiction of Gurnemanz in Wagner's *Parsifal* – "*Du siehst mein Sohn, Zum Raum wird hier die Zeit*" – we can say that the objective of Husserl's teleological-historical reflections was to open up a creative "space" of action through a thoughtful encounter with historical "time". And like for Parsifal, for whom "the wound can be healed only spear that caused it", the crisis of historical relativism can only be overcome by a radical reflection of our historical way of being. In order to understand this idea, we need to focus on Husserl's distinction empirical and transcendental genesis.

4.2. Absolute and Relative Ideals: A Phenomenology of Progress

The interpretation according to which Husserl's teleological-historical reflections present us with an uncritically Eurocentric account of philosophical rationality has been suggested by several scholars, most importantly, by Jacques Derrida. Already in his early work on the idea of genesis in Husserl's works (*The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, written in 1954; published in 1990), Derrida points towards a series of inconsistencies in Husserl's teleological account of Europe that result from his highly problematic distinction between its transcendental and empirical genesis.[39] While on a general level, Derrida praises Husserl for discovering the possibility of reconciling between the "objectivist" and "historicist" approaches to ideality – ideas can have a history, a genesis, but

[38] This idea was already anticipated in a 1934 manuscript: "Jeder Versuch, aufgrund der Verkettung literarisch dokumentierter Tatsachen eine Geistesgeschichte, eine Geschichte der Philosophie zu konstruieren, ist nicht ein „Roman", sondern eine „Interpretation", eine durch die Tatsächlichkeiten der Dokumentierung gebundene „Dichtung"." HuaXXIX: 47.
[39] Derrida 2003: 145ff.

this does not make them relative – Husserl's insistence on the purely transcendental (or "spiritual") character of Europe's genesis made him neglect the necessary empirical aspect of this development. If the *eidos* of Europe that delineates the infinite horizon of philosophy has only "one spiritual birthplace", as Derrida reads Husserl, then it is necessary that this idea is somehow tied to this particular locality, the Hellenic world. If the birth of Greek philosophy signified the "primal institution" (*Urstiftung*) of the idea of Europe, how could Husserl claim to keep this institution free of any "real" empirical history? Thus for Husserl, Derrida concludes, "the idea of philosophy is thus reduced to a fact"[40] – what looked like a transcendental idea of pure theoretical attitude, reveals itself as an outcome of a particular empirical situation.

Derrida's criticism was based on his interpretation of the contaminated (*contaminé*) character of transcendental concepts in *The Problem of Genesis* – an interpretation that became an important point of departure for his later works such as *Voice and Phenomenon* (published in 1967). According to him, Husserl's insistence on locating a pure, transcendental account of genesis – a pure *Urstiftung* – was contradictory with the basic phenomenological insight on time-consciousness, namely, that the present moment carries necessarily within itself a horizon of non-presence, of retention and protention. For Derrida, the very existence of genetic phenomenology had revealed the paradoxical nature of transcendental concepts, which were supposed to be at the same time "constitutive" and "constituted" – something that function as the condition for the appearance of the world, but also something that appear in space and time.

In Derrida's view, Husserl's idea of the "spiritual geography" of Europe was problematic not only with regard to its own empirical constraints but it also gave birth to a rather odd division between European and non-European cultures. By singling out the theoretical attitude as the emergence of transcendental historicity in Greek philosophy, Husserl was inclined to split the very notion of humanity into two separate domains: the transcendental and the empirical, i.e., "the spiritual family of Europe" and the "families of an empirical type".[41] In Husserl's analysis, Derrida argues, this division was basically equivalent with the distinction between

[40] Derrida 2003: 156.
[41] Derrida 2003: 159.

teleological and non-teleological cultures – cultures that have their unity through a single teleological horizon and cultures whose objectivities and accomplishments are bound merely by an analogical coherence. This Husserlian hypothesis, as Derrida puts it, would be outright "laughable".[42] However, for him this is the only possible way to understand Husserl's controversial distinctions between the "immanent teleology" of Europe and the mere "empirical sociological types" of India and China that Husserl seems to make in his late works, especially in the *Crisis* and its supplementary texts.

However, as a careful textual analysis indicates, this is not exactly what Husserl had in mind. While it is true that Husserl approached the idea of Europe in connection to the notion of teleology, this is not to say that Husserl would have restricted the use of this notion exclusively to Europe. Derrida's citation of Husserl's "reworked text of the Vienna Lecture" – "*seule l'Europe a une «téléologie immanente»*"[43], "only Europe has an 'immanent teleology'" – is not actually taken from Husserl but from Paul Ricoeur's article "Husserl and the Sense of History" (*Husserl et le sens de l'histoire*, 1949), and it is an erroneous translation of two passages of the Vienna Lecture.[44] In this text, Husserl referred first to what he called "*nur unserem Europa gleichsam eingeborene Teleologie*"[45] – a teleology that is born *only within our Europe* – and second, to the philosophical idea that is immanent to European history: "*Die der Geschichte Europas (des geistigen Europas) immanente philosophische Idee aufzuweisen, oder, was dasselbe ist, die ihr immanente Teleologie* […]".[46] As any diligent reader notes, what Husserl called "immanent teleology" was indeed something that he sees as specific to the development of European history, however, this is not to say anything of the application of the concept of teleology with regard to other cultures. Rather, Europe distinguishes itself from other cultures on the basis of the type or character of its teleology – on the basis of the infinite horizon, which characterizes some of its practices and accomplishments.

Moreover, the reference to the "empirical sociological types" of India and China is inaccurate – and it is not to be found in the Vienna lecture.

[42] Derrida 2003: 157.
[43] Ibid.
[44] See Ricoeur 1967: 152.
[45] HuaVI: 318
[46] HuaVI: 319.

In the preface to the *Crisis*, Husserl does make a contrast between what he calls an "absolute idea" that may be discovered as a fundamental constituent of European humanity and "empirical anthropological types" of which "China" and "India" are given as examples.[47] This distinction, which many commentators deal with outright indignation, should not to be read as a simple classification of cultures. As it is clear from the context, what Husserl lays out here is a difference in method: while the teleological idea is something that can be approached from the perspective of inner historicity – of the phenomenological, first-person perspective – anthropological typification can only amount to an objectivist account narrated from a third-person point of view. In the Vienna lecture, we find an explicit reference to "Indian historicity" (*die indische Geschichtlichkeit*) and its peculiar teleology, which we can grasp, at least partially, by empathizing with its peculiar accomplishments (such as writings, works of art, practices).[48] As we already saw in connection to the generative background of Greek philosophy (Ch. 3.2), Husserl conceived this empathizing activity not only as informative, but also as *productive*: for him, this critical encounter with the "alien" (*fremde*) became one of the central motives of cultural renewal and the specific universal attitude it motivates.[49]

I am stressing the significance of Derrida's early critique, not only of exegetical interest, but because it is reformulated in different ways in his later analyses of Husserl's alleged Euro-centrism. In his essay "The Other Heading" (*L'autre cap*), for instance, Derrida distinguishes himself from what he calls the "arche-teleological" narrative of not only Husserl – but of Hegel, Valéry and Heidegger – a narrative that projects the "spiritual unity" of European humanity through a transcendental analysis of its *arche* and *telos*, beginning and end. This modernist narrative, as Derrida puts it, "dates from a moment when Europe sees itself on the horizon, that is to say, from its end [...], from the imminence of its end"[50] and as such it represents one of the most destructive traits of modern thought. Why? Because by projecting the fate of Europe in terms of an imminent end – the end of "history" (Hegel), of "philosophy" (Heidegger), of "European

[47] "Erst damit wäre entschieden, ob das europäische Menschentum eine absolute Idee in sich trägt und nicht ein bloß empirischer anthropologischer Typus ist wie China oder Indien [...]" HuaVI: 14.
[48] HuaVI: 320.
[49] On Indians as "alien", see HuaVI: 304, 320; HuaXXIX: 198.
[50] Derrida 1992: 28.

spirit" (Valéry) – it confines itself to a historical narrative that is at the same time monolithic and hermetic. To say that Europe proceeds from its beginning to its end is to look away not only from the "other headings" that ascend within this tradition, but also from "the heading of the other". Accordingly, it closes off the possibility of relocating the ends of culture through an encounter with the other.

What Derrida seems to miss, first of all, is the very motivation that led Husserl to frame the problematic of Europe in terms of teleological development. As I showed in the first part of this work, Husserl's late philosophy grew as a reply to the early twentieth-century debate on crisis, which delineated the future of Europe in terms of an irreversible demise. Philosophy could no longer think of alternatives, because it had given in to the naturalist and physicalist paradigm of the modern natural sciences. These currents, as I showed, had given up on the problem of development and teleology, and consequently, they were unable to pose questions on the ends and goals of a culture, or the possibility of progress. For Husserl, the teleological reflections were to be understood as the very countertendency of the naturalist paradigm:

> I mean that we feel (and in spite of all obscurity this feeling is probably legitimate) that an entelechy is inborn in our European civilization which holds sway throughout all the changing shapes of Europe and accords to them the sense of a development toward an ideal shape of life and being as an eternal pole. Not that this is a case of one of those well-known types of purposeful striving which give the organic beings their character in the physical realm; thus it is not something like a biological development from a seminal form through stages to maturity with succeeding ages and dying-out. There is, for essential reasons, no zoology of peoples. They are spiritual unities; they do not have, and in particular the supranational unity of Europe does not have, a mature shape that hasever been reached or could be reached as a shape that is regularly repeated. Spiritual humanity has never been complete and never will be, and can never repeat itself.[51]

[51] "Ich meine, wir fühlen es (und bei aller Unklarheit hat dieses Gefühl wohl sein Recht), da unserem europäischen Menschentum eine Entelechie eingeboren ist, die den europäischen Gestaltenwandel durchherrscht und ihm den Sinn einer Entwicklung auf eine ideale Lebens- und Seinsgestalt als einen ewigen Pol verleiht. Nicht als ob es sich hier um eine der bekannten Zielstrebigkeiten handelte, die dem physischen Reich der organischen Wesen ihren Charakter geben, also um so etwas wie biologische Entwicklung von einer Keimgestalt in Stufen bis zur Reife mit nachfolgendem Altern und Absterben. Es gibt wesensmäßig

As Husserl puts it here, the *telos* that unfolds through the transcendental genesis of Europe is not something achievable; rather, it functions as the eternal pole which endows the particular history with its peculiar future horizon. It is exactly for this reason that the "spiritual teleology" of Europe resists all forms of natural determinism – for instance, that of biological development – but also the modern notion of history as something that is exhausted by a particular empirical *telos*. Here, contrary to what Derrida suggests, Husserl and Hegel stand again at opposite ends. Although it is debatable whether Hegel envisaged the end of history at his own time – whether Napoleon riding to Jena in 1806 really represented the spirit of world-history on a horseback – it seems clear that he could see no real alternatives for what he considered the empirical "mirror" of spirit's progression: the egalitarian institutions of the modern nation-state. The absolute *telos* of history as the completion of spirit's progression – universal freedom – was there at Hegel's sight, and it had been given a concrete form; the end was imminent simply because he could not envisage any greater upheaval than that of the French revolution, which had confined itself to this promise of universal freedom.

Husserl did not contest the achievements and ideals of this development – actually, at the outskirts of the First World War Husserl was still speaking of imminence of German victory in Fichtean-Hegelian terms as the triumph of spirit and the power of will, which "cannot be resisted by any force of the world like in 1813/14 [i.e., as Napoleon was defeated by the Prussian coalition in the so-called *Befreiungskriege* which ended the French occupation]."[52] However, what Husserl came to realize was that even the modern nation-state was still only a partial, and in many respects unfounded realization of universal freedom. This deficiency was not due to the peculiar character of the modern state, but to the ineffable character of the underlying ideal as such. The absolute ideal of humanity – articulated first through the ideas of autonomy and self-responsibility – cannot be realized by *any* empirical genesis, whether this is a *polis*, a nation

keine Zoologie der Völker. Sie sind geistige Einheiten, sie haben, und insbesondere die Übernationalität Europa hat keine je erreichte und erreichbare reife Gestalt als Gestalt einer geregelten Wiederholung. Seelisches Menschentum ist nie fertig gewesen und wird es nie werden und kann sich nie wiederholen." HuaVI: 320.

[52] "Es ist absolut sicher, daß wir siegen: Diesem Geist, dieser Willensgewalt, kann jetzt wie 1813/14 keine Macht der Welt widerstehen", letter to Heinrich Husserl, quoted in HuaXXV: xxx

or even a cosmopolitan community. Instead, the idea of transcendental genesis with its peculiar horizon of infinity was to be understood as a critical device through which the essential incompleteness of all empirical institutions can be illustrated. Thus, contrary to what Derrida claims, for Husserl the notion of teleology did not entail imminence of an end but rather its opposite: the constant deferment of "the end of history".

In a way, Husserl's vision of the teleology of history was even more *idealist* than that of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophers but at the same time it was also more *realist*. Why more idealist? Because the historical reflections of the modern philosophers of history were still relying on the organic metaphors of "crisis" and "revolution" or on Hegelian *theodicy* that portrayed the advancement of human freedom as something natural and therefore necessary. In contrast to these ideas, Husserl insisted on the inalienably ideal character of this development, which should not model itself on the basis of the real world; teleology should not confine itself to the regularities of biological development nor should it rely on any kind of eschatological expectation concerning the outcome of history.

But it is exactly for this reason that one is able to have a more realist stance towards history. Modern philosophies of history, which had modeled themselves on the basis of Christian eschatology, were born out of the promise according to which the conflicts and suffering of mankind turn out to be meaningful precisely because they are ultimately pacified by the full realization of human rationality. History makes sense, because it ultimately leads to just world. Here, Husserl's "realism" was exactly his unwillingness to accept this inevitability as the underlying dialectical force of history. We should accept no *a priori* projections concerning the course of history, but instead, we should take history as it is – with all of its defects and injustices.[53] History, like the natural sciences, should also be subsumed to the phenomenological *epoché*.

However, it is exactly this fundamental realism that opened up the creative horizon of philosophical critique. Once we confine ourselves to the belief that, ultimately, history will *not* do the work for us and will not bring about the ideal human condition, we are obliged to take responsi-

[53] As Husserl put it in a letter to Abbé Baudin, what he meant by the universal "teleology of reason" was to be distinguished from the typical religious formulations teleology that secure the righteous and just character of the world. This letter is quoted in HuaXXIX: xv.

bility for its future course. From this phenomenological perspective, *philosopher is not midwife of history*; instead, s/he is the one who interrupts or suspends its seemingly natural course.[54] What Husserl was against was exactly what Walter Benjamin later called the "theological" element in the teleology of modern philosophy of history – especially that of historical materialism – that is, the unwavering belief according to which, eventually, "history is on our side" (i.e., on the side of reason). This belief, for Benjamin, manifested itself especially in the false hopes the Social Democratic movement, which believed in the irresistible, though gradual progress and perfectibility of humankind. History, for Benjamin, can only be on the side of she who narrates it; therefore, the critique of the naïve idea of progress must begin with the critique of history proceeding through "homogenous, empty time".[55]

What connects Benjamin and Husserl in this regard is that they both recognized the imminent threat in the modern idea of historical crisis. Benjamin, like Husserl, had experienced the unstable period of the Weimar Republic and understood that at least politically, crises are not mere objective facts but they are always also wanted. "The tradition of the oppressed teaches us," wrote Benjamin, "that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule." Thus, "we must attain to a concept of history that is in keeping with this insight."[56] Against the false state of emergency that is held up by the oppressors against the oppressed – a crisis that merely suffocates the alternative courses on the basis of the binding force of the present moment – the task of philosophy is to introduce a "real state of emergency" that releases the emancipatory power of the present moment (what Benjamin calls the *Jetztzeit* in distinction from *Gegenwart*). Husserl, likewise, wanted to distance himself from the false crisis of the early twentieth-century that merely concentrated on the present moment, and introduce a novel possibility of reading the crisis as an *a priori* category of historical development, which calls the ends and purposes of culture into question.

Here, I believe, we arrive at one of the most important insights concerning Husserl's reflections of Europe. Rather than simply representing

[54] This point is made by Steinbock 1994a: 458; 1998a: 196.
[55] Benjamin 1992: 264.
[56] Benjamin 1992: 257.

the herald of progress – or, what Derrida called the "good example [...] which incarnates in its purity the *telos* of all historicity"[57]– the problematic of Europe pointed towards a novel concept of historical development that radically challenged all conventional ideas on the advancement of humanity. This development, I would argue, was to be conceived neither cumulative nor dialectical; instead, it unfolds through a peculiar interplay of the relative and absolute ideals, through the intertwining of the empirical and the transcendental aspects of historical development. Analogical to the idea of paradox of subjectivity, Husserl conceived history in terms of these two necessary and "reciprocal" aspects, neither of which should be understood in terms of deterministic development. History, as it is realized through the striving of concrete human beings, is indeed something empirical – something that is localized in place and time – but its development is not completely arbitrary. Through the teleological structure of transcendental genesis, history has its own *a priori*, not in the sense of predetermined causal relations, but in the sense of necessary relations of foundation, of co-existence and succession. In brief, the idea of transcendental genesis means simply that there is a certain necessity in *how* things happened, but there is no necessity *that* they happened.

Let me clarify the argument. As I argued in previous sections, the most important reformulation of the concept of transcendental through genetic phenomenology concerned its relation to concept of necessity. Whereas Kant had still delineated the notion of transcendental in terms of "necessary" and "a priori" structures, Husserl argued that one could still speak of a priori, constitutive features without making them necessary. For instance, the faculty of language that makes possible the constitution of ideal meanings is not there at the moment of our birth (or during the first year of our lives), but this does not make it a mere psychological notion. Language opens up a new constitutive dimension of experience which makes possible what Husserl called the "empty intending" or the purely "signitive" intuition: a specific intentional relation that does not necessitate the presence of a thing, but that can still be intersubjectively shared. Despite their cultural and historical variations, this is the common feature of all human languages, that is, they allow the transmission of meaning in an inter-generational manner (although this meaning may

[57] Derrida 1989: 115.

not be transmitted as identical). However, it was not a necessary development that this faculty emerged in the life of *homo sapiens* 100,000 years ago (which is only one of the many approximations) – as it is no necessity that it emerges within our contemporaries. As we know from the cases of language disorders (aphasia), linguistic faculties are something that can vary a great deal, or, as in some cases, they might be completely undeveloped.

The same concerns philosophy. As I argued in the third part of this work, Husserl conceived the birth of the philosophical attitude as essentially tied to several pre-philosophical practices such as the deterritorialization of traditional *polis*, the travelogues of *theoria*, the critique of myth, and the ethical skepticism of the sophists. While it is clear that none of these motives as such accounted for the birth of *philosophia* as communal activity, they all contributed to the emergence of the necessary condition through the philosophical attitude was made possible. Without the disempowerment (*Entkräftung*) of tradition promoted by these practices, the idea of radical self-responsibility would have remained undeveloped. This is not to say, however, that ideas of all-embracing self-responsibility or pure consideration of essences would have automatically followed the development of these pre-scientific practices – it is well possible that the (Protagorean) motive of ethical relativism would have only contributed to the frameworks of political discourse or rhetoric. Philosophy was possible on the basis of this generative transformation – and this transformation was indeed necessary element for this transformation – but it was by no means necessary *that* philosophy emerged at this historical stage.

Here we return to Derrida's counterargument: How could Husserl still define the transcendentality of the philosophical attitude free of any empirical constraints? If Europe, through its origin, has this privilege to philosophy, what could the ideality and universality of the philosophical attitude mean? The answer can be provided only by considering the teleological aspect of philosophy. As a historical accomplishment, philosophy realized itself through concrete practices such as the oral discourse of the public sphere (dialogue), writing, comparative critique of myths. As such, it was defined by several empirical practices and concrete goals. Without these practices, the idea of philosophy could have meant only an individualistic attitude, a personal contemplation of the necessary structures of reality. However, because philosophy was essentially a cultural

accomplishment, a communal-generative activity, it necessarily embodied a link to the empirical world. The ideality and universality of the philosophical attitude were not something that could be attained once and for all; they could only be conceived as the horizon of the overall teleological development of philosophy. Philosophy wanted to be ideal and universal, but it was necessarily forced to articulate itself in regard to empirical constraints; it found itself as a rupture between the everyday reality of the common man and the infinite horizon of philosophical truths.

This essential rupture between the empirical and the ideal – the cave and the daylight (Plato), or, the mortal and the divine element of the soul (Aristotle) – was something that Husserl wanted to articulate in its teleological sense:

> Here we must certainly distinguish between philosophy as a historical fact of a given time and philosophy as idea – the idea of an infinite task. Any philosophy that exists at a given historical time is a more or less successful attempt to realize the guiding idea of the infinity and at the same time even the totality of truths. Practical ideals, namely, ideals discerned as eternal poles of which one cannot lose sight throughout one's whole life without compunction, without being untrue to oneself and thus becoming unhappy – are by no means always clearly and determinately discerned; they are anticipated in ambiguous generality.[58]

Thus, the horizon of infinity that was opened up by Greek philosophy with its universal historicity could only delineate this horizon of infinity through particular practical ideals. By doing so, the novel idea of transcendental attitude did not completely separate itself from the empirical; rather, it formed a new relation towards the latter, a relation that Husserl understood in terms of a *conflict*. As he put it elsewhere, the history of Europe had not been a simple triumph of universal reason through ever-closer approximations, but rather, it had been the "battle between awakened

[58] "'Philosophie' – da müssen wir wohl scheiden Philosophie als historisches Faktum einer jeweiligen Zeit und Philosophie als Idee, Idee einer unendlichen Aufgabe. Die jeweils historisch wirkliche Philosophie ist der mehr oder minder gelungene Versuch, die leitende Idee der Unendlichkeit und dabei sogar Allheit der Wahrheiten zu verwirklichen. Praktische Ideale, nämlich erschaut als ewige Pole, von denen man in seinem ganzen Leben nicht abirren kann, ohne Reue, ohne sich untreu und damit unselig zu werden, sind in dieser Schau keineswegs schon klar und bestimmt, sie sind antizipiert in einer vieldeutigen Allgemeinheit." HuaVI: 338. Translation modified.

reason and the powers of historical reality"[59] – a history of constant adhesions to particular norms and conceptual frameworks of specific historical situations. In other words, the transcendental genesis of Europe was at the same time an empirical one. What defined the transcendental history of Europe, however, was exactly its constant reflexivity towards the empirical.

This constant tension between empirical and transcendental genesis, I argue, served as the fundamental motivation for Husserl's own outline of historical development, introduced through the conceptual distinction between "relative" and "absolute" *ideals*. Although this dialectic of absolute and relative goals (*Zwecke*) was something that Husserl discussed from the beginning of the 1920s, it was only at the very last phase of his career that this division was discussed in connection to a consistent philosophical account of historical teleology – as something that was supposed to function as an alternative to the Hegelian idea of historical dialectic. That history realizes itself through the interplay of absolute and relative goals, and not the dialectical pattern of thesis, antithesis and synthesis provides a possibility of outlining an idea of historical development that recognizes, first of all, the active and transformatory role of the individual in regard to the constraints of culture. Moreover, this idea presents us with a conception of historical development without any illusions concerning its just character; progress is something that can only be willed on the basis of the present moment. Lastly, it argues for the essential ineffability of the normative ideal of humanity, which can only be realized by transcending the viewpoint of the atomic individual; reason and freedom belong together, but their genuine teleological sense can only be realized in the context of infinite generative development.

Let me describe the emergence of this distinction in Husserl's work. While discussing the teleological structure of human life in the context of individual ethics, Husserl distinguished between "absolute" and "relative" ideals of perfection (*Vollkommenheitsideal*).[60] As the idea of autonomous self-responsibility emerges within the life of an individual, it gives way not only to an idea of rational behavior but to an ideal of person as the "true

[59] "Es geht durch die ganze 'europäische' Geschichte von ihrem Anfangen an dieser Kampf zwischen der erwachten Vernunft und den Mächten der historischen Wirklichkeit". HuaXXVII: 106.

[60] HuaXXVII: 33ff.

and real self". This ideal, argues Husserl, can be conceived in two regards. First, it can be conceived as a relative ideal that denotes an existence that I can justify on the basis of those capabilities and conditions that have been given to me. This relative ideal, argues Husserl, provides us with the ethical imperative already formulated by Brentano, namely: "Do the best among the achievable!"[61] From this relative or context-bound ideal there stands out what Husserl calls the absolute ideal of person: it denotes not only an existence based on acts that can be absolutely and completely justified but also the full realization and perfection of rational capabilities in whole. As such, this absolute ideal – which Husserl also names the "idea of God" – is of course essentially unattainable. Even more importantly, it can only be anticipated in an undefined generality, for our concrete idea of perfection is constituted on the basis of concrete human capacities or exemplary figures (of which the figure of Christ is given as example).[62]

Although Husserl's ethical maxim comes close to the Kantian one, there is also a stark difference that separates these two from each other. Recall that for Kant, the categorical imperative delineated an idea of universal justification that would be bound to the indefinite repeatability of a certain act. For this reason, Kant could formulate his ethical maxim into the form of a universal imperative: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law."[63] This idea, however, did not say anything about the fundamental relativity of our historical, cultural and social situation: a single mother being compelled to strenuous shift work obviously has a different concept of human freedom than, for instance, a person who does not have to mind daily about the basic needs of material well-being. This discrepancy does not alter the grounds of ethical justification as such; by making visible the concrete obstacles and hindrances that necessarily constrain the realization of the absolute ideal, it reveals the essential embeddedness of all imperatives in human capacities. For this reason, Husserl formulated his relative ideal in terms of an imperative to strive at "best possible at a given moment" (*das zur Zeit bestmögliche*).[64] The relativity of the ethical

[61] HuaXXVIII: 221.
[62] See for instance, HuaXXVII: 100ff.
[63] "[H]andle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die du zugleich wollen kannst, daß sie ein allgemeines Gesetz werde." Kant, Akad.-A IV: 421.
[64] HuaXXVII: 36

criterion, however, does not entail simple relativism. Instead, it aims at showing the essentially finite character of human striving, the essential one-sidedness that characterizes our way of being. We can do our best only on the basis of those capabilities and faculties that we have acquired at a given time.

However, if the relative ideal already prescribes the idea "best possible" human life, why make things more complicated by introducing the absolute ideal? The distinction between relative and absolute ideal is needed, because the relative ideals themselves have a tendency of becoming absolute. It belongs to the structure of human life that once we acquire ourselves certain goals and commit ourselves to them, these goals have a tendency of becoming a part of our abiding directedness to the world. They become *habitual* in the sense that we do not consider the basis of their justification. Here, the horizon of infinite perfectibility reminds us of our finitude – it reminds us of the dangers of premature satisfaction that arise from the particular successes. Again, Husserl breaks here with Kant: the ethical subject is never a mere empty pole – a formal transcendental principle – but a concrete, constituted subject with certain facilities and capabilities. This does not mean, however, that one should simply resign to those abilities s/he has acquired. The ethical subject is not only someone who carries the principle of justification within herself – someone who functions as the *causa sui* of his action – but also someone who is constantly call to develop as well as critically examine his or her own capabilities. Thus, what we have here is the paradox of subjectivity conceived in terms of practical reason: the ethically striving human being is *both the subject as well as the object of his or her pretensions*.[65]

The distinction between relative and absolute ideal provides us with another approach to the "chief theme of all ethics", namely, the motive of renewal.[66] As I already pointed out in chapter 1.4, Husserl understood this idea as the necessary perquisite of the genuine sense of *self-responsibility*, which realizes itself not only according to the best possible evidence but on the basis of a critical reflection that is targeted towards one's beliefs, pretensions, habits and capabilities. On the basis of the aforementioned

[65] "Er ist Subjekt und zugleich Objekt seines Strebens, das ins Unendliche werdende Werk, dessen Werkmeister er selbst ist." HuaXXVII: 37.
[66] HuaXXVII: 20.

reflections, we may observe why the idea of renewal makes fully sense only as a teleological notion: I can of course change my habits and goals from one to another, but without reflecting my previous life *in its totality*, I cannot reckon that these changes are a turn for the better (e.g., I may merely repeat a previously acquired pattern of behavior). In fact, I can never fully trust that any of my choices will ultimately turn out to be absolutely right. For this reason, Husserl emphasized that the idea of ethical renewal does not delineate the constant perfection of the ethical subject, but instead, this attitude can only be acknowledged as a form of self-elevation (*Selbsterhöhung*), which moves from "valuelessness to a lesser valuelessness".[67] Perfection is not to be attained in this world.

This brings us back to the topic of crisis. As I argued in the first part, Husserl found the basic paradigm for his notion of crisis in the "loss of meaning" that characterizes the formation of sense in temporal development. A crisis of meaning takes place, when we fail to give intuitive founding for our beliefs, concepts, and values – when we discover that we had been living according to commitments we did not justify. This is why Derrida located Husserl's basic sense of the crisis in the idea of "forgetting" or "covering over" (*recouvrement*) of transcendental subjectivity, which is the ultimate ground of all formation of sense.[68] As Derrida maintained, in the Husserlian framework of generativity, a crisis of meaning could only be responded by *reactivating* the genesis and the origin of sense – as in the case of modern natural sciences, their crisis was to be overcome only by leading the basic concepts back to their evident foundation in the lifeworld. Husserl, according to Derrida, could still hold on to the idea of "complete presence" as the indispensable ideal of historical development. Although Derrida acknowledged Husserl's strenuous efforts in understanding the general theory of crisis – i.e., how the *virtuality* of language constantly predisposes meaning to its emptying – Husserl still failed to grasp why these crises are actually "an inner necessity of history", and not just an unhappy incident.[69]

As Husserl seems to suggest in few passages, the idea of crisis that accompanies the development of teleological ideals is indeed *an inner*

[67] HuaXXVII: 38.
[68] Derrida 2003: 171.
[69] Derrida 2003: 172. See Marrati 2005: 24.

necessity of history, and it is something that cannot be overcome by simply reactivating the origin of a particular formation of sense. The crisis, understood as a category of teleological-historical development of sense and meaning, emerges only on the basis of relative ideals whose one-sidedness and finitude can be acknowledged in retrospect. Although we might be able to return to the moment of their original instantiation and discover their intuitive justification, they may still turn out to be partial and unfounded. As Husserl put it in connection to the teleological development of philosophy:

> It belongs to the essence of reason that the philosophers at first understand and labor at their task in an absolutely necessary one-sided way. Actually there is nothing perverse in this, it is not an error. As we said, the straight and necessary path they must take allows them to see only one side of the task, at first without noticing that the whole infinite task of theoretically knowing the totality of what is has other sides as well.[70]

As Husserl continues, "universal reflection" is motivated exactly through "obscurities" and "contradictions" that we discover by reflecting the total horizon of philosophy.[71] We can perhaps now observe why Husserl, unlike Derrida seems to suggest, would consider crisis as a productive category of historical development, and not just something that accompanies the development of sense.[72] Following Philip J. Buckley, it can be argued that in this Husserlian account, the "mistakes of the tradition can be viewed not solely as mistakes, but also as moments leading towards the revelation of truth."[73] We approach the universal perspective only by constantly colliding with the one-sided interpretations, with the finitude of our own perspective. Thus Buckley, following Rudolf Bernet, raises the

[70] "Es gehört zum Wesen der Vernunft, daß die Philosophen ihre unendliche Aufgabe zunächst nur in einer absolut notwendigen Einseitigkeit verstehen und bearbeiten können. Darin liegt an sich keine Verkehrtheit, kein Irrtum, sondern, wie gesagt, der für sie gerade und notwendige Weg läßt sie erst eine Seite der Aufgabe ergreifen, zunächst ohne zu merken, daß die ganze unendliche Aufgabe, die Allheit des Seienden theoretisch zu erkennen, noch andere Seiten hat." HuaVI: 338–339.

[71] "Meldet sich in Unklarheiten und Widersprüchen die Unzulänglichkeit, so motiviert dies einen Ansatz für eine universale Besinnung." HuaVI: 339.

[72] For this reason, Husserl claims, the "philosophical generativity loses from time to time the power of living procreation (*verliert die Kraft lebendiger Fortpflanzung*)" HuaVI: 488.

[73] Buckley 1992: 125.

question whether Husserl's teleological narrative is best understood in terms of a *felix culpa*, a "felicitous mistake" that derives its fundamental sense from the original sin of Adam. For the Christian narrative, the Fall resulted not from God's pre-established plan but from the freedom of the individual, whereby it was by no means necessary; however, it was only on the basis of this Fall that mankind was set on the strenuous path to salvation that was brought to its end by Christ. Likewise, the emergence of transcendental phenomenology was only possible through the crisis of naturalism and physicalism, which were by no means necessary, but which resulted from the unclarities of the modern philosophy (especially the question of transcendental). It was exactly for this reason that Husserl linked the novel possibility of cultural self-reflection to the "breakdown-situation of our time" (*"Zusammenbruchs"-Situation unserer Zeit*).[74]

The problem of *felix culpa* is that it still seems to define itself in regard to a pre-given understanding of history as something fundamentally righteous (as in the case of Christian eschatology). That all "mistakes" are legitimized by the teleological progress "leading towards the revelation of truth" comes very close to Kant's "divine providence" or the Hegelian Theodicy which ultimately reveal the hidden rationality of the historical irrationalities.[75] While it is evident that although we *can* and *ought to* learn from the "mistakes" of history – the unfounded or one-sided interpretations that announce themselves as historical breakdowns – we should to be careful in simply justifying them in the name of progress. There is something suspicious in the application of the logic of *felix culpa* to Stalin's purges, the Holocaust, or, the over-consumption of the earth's natural resources during the twentieth century. These events can, undoubtedly, motivate new reflections that lead to a broader notion of responsibility, but it would be suspect to understand them as processes leading towards the revelation of truth. Or, to put it more succinctly, perhaps we ought to consider these events as the emergence of a new "truth of humanity" – a truth that was made possible by the techno-economical/bureaucratic nihilism of the twentieth century, or, the mass-consumption of the industrialized globalization. This means that philosophy, in its venture to understand the transcendental genesis of human history, ought not to consider

[74] HuaVI: 58.
[75] On the idea of "providence" (*Vorsehung*), see Kant Akad.-A VIII: 361.

all "novel establishments" as improvements or elevated approximations of the original establishment.

But if we cannot discover providence in history – if, as Nietzsche put it, we discover only decadence instead of progress[76] – what can really motivate the teleological point of view? "What can bind us to our goal?" Husserl asks in a late manuscript:

> Is it only the foolhardiness of striving toward a goal which is beautiful but only vaguely possible, one which is not definitely impossible but still, in the end, imaginary, one which gradually, after the experience of millennia, finally begins to bear a very great inductive probability of being unattainable? Or does what appears from the outside to be a failure, and on the whole actually is one, bring with it a certain evidence of practical possibility and necessity, as the evidence of an imperfect, one-sided, partial success, but still a success in this failure?[77]

It is exactly in this text (*Denial of Scientific Philosophy*, *Bestreitung der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie*, Appendix XXVIII of *Krisis*) that we find one of the few original formulations of Husserl's own historical method. If, as Husserl seems to think, our historical reflections (*Besinnungen*) do not allow us to view the development of the world in terms of a Kantian *Roman der Geschichte* or Hegelian "triumph of spirit", what form can they take? Here, Husserl provides his answer by evoking the concept of *Dichtung*, "poetic invention" – a creative interpretation that takes the present moment as its necessary point of departure.[78] Now, while it is clear that the past philosophers have not agreed upon the task of philosophy – its methods, basic concepts, metaphysical predicaments, or goals – this does not mean that we could not view this history in terms of a common intention. Rather, it is the necessary task of a philosopher who takes upon the task of historical reflection to view the past from the viewpoint of a unitary *telos*. We must view the thinkers of the past *as if* they had been contributing to a common

[76] "Nothing avails: one must go forward — step by step further into decadence (that is my definition of modern "progress"). "Es hilft nichts: man muss vorwärts, will sagen Schritt für Schritt weiter in der décadence (— dies meine Definition des modernen „Fortschritts" …)." KSA 6.144.

[77] Or, as Husserl asks in the preface to Crisis: "Can we live in this world, where historical occurrence is nothing but an unending concatenation of illusory progress and bitter disappointment?" HuaVI: 4–5. This passage is also translated and quoted in Hart 1989: 166.

[78] HuaVI: 512–513.

task, for it is only this way that their work can be reconciled in the over-all teleological horizon of philosophy.[79] This *Dichtung* of history, writes Husserl, "has not and does not remain fixed"[80], but it must be performed anew in each historical situation. We are, as James Hart puts it, "commissioned to tell the story better."[81] This simply means that each philosopher (and each generation) must take responsibility of their teleological interpretations, and by doing so, they need to go against the common narratives of the tradition – they need to excise the illusions of inevitable progress and decline.

This leads us to the fundamental insight concerning the phenomenological idea of *progress*. In one of his E-manuscripts entitled "Teleology", Husserl argues for the active role of individual human beings in projecting themselves as teleological beings. As the idea of infinite perfection becomes a part of our intentional directedness to the world, it gives way not only to the will to live according to the best possible justification but also to the "will to live according to the idea of progress".[82] Far from denoting any kind of optimism on how things will turn out to be, this will to progress realizes itself merely in the perpetual will of renewal, which takes the total teleological horizon of one's life as its point of departure. In other words, progress, in this phenomenological sense, is not a category of *being* but of *practical reason*.[83] Progress is not something that exists in the world, but instead, it is something that I can realize as a teleological being – as a being who can reflectively grasp my previous life in its totality. This is what Husserl means when he says that strictly speaking, human life cannot be rational, but it can only *become rational*.[84] This possibility, however, does not guarantee happiness or salvation, nor does it necessarily provide an abiding gratification – my choices may turn out to be unjustified, or simply wrong. Thus, following Fichte (and perhaps echoing Aristotle), Husserl

[79] HuaVI: 513; see also HuaXXIX: 397.
[80] HuaVI: 513.
[81] Hart 1992a: 291.
[82] "[…] im Willen, gemäss der Idee des Progressus leben zu wollen[.]" HuaXV: 379. See also HuaVIII: 14–15.
[83] "Aber die absolute Teleologie ist nicht ein Zug der vorgegebenen Welt als solcher, ist nie etwas „schon Seiendes" und im schon Seienden der Weltlichkeit vorgezeichnete, abhebbare, als Form induktiver Zukunft notwendige Strukturform" (HuaMatVIII: 433–434).
[84] "Ein Mensch, ein Menschenleben kann nicht vernünftig sein, sondern nur vernünftig werden, und es kann nur vernünftig werden, es sei denn im Werden nach oder unter dem bewußt gewordenen kategorischen Imperativ." HuaXXVII: 119.

could find the seed of "blessedness" (*Seligkeit*) only in the striving towards good.[85]

As Anthony Steinbock has shown, Husserl's later works mark a transition to the generative or communal-historical aspects of rational life, and this especially in an ethical regard. "Living according to an ethical *self*-regulation is not fully ethical", writes Steinbock, "because it is still based on the *contemporary individual*, on a 'self'."[86] According to him, what this perspective lacks is the "*generative* dimension as *communal* and *historical*" – I am not responsible merely for my own beliefs and actions, but of the whole inherited tradition while being a part of a certain historical-communal nexus of meaning. According to this view, Husserl presents us with an idea of ethical responsibility that goes beyond the individual person as someone who lives or behaves so and so. It extends the notion of responsibility to concern also those sedimentations of meaning (for instance, the modern natural sciences) that we have inherited as being a part of a certain generative context.[87]

While I agree with Steinbock, I would like to suggest that Husserl's conclusion can be taken a step further. To say that social ethics – with its generative dimension – constitutes the full and genuine sense of ethics does not merely entail the distention of my personal self-responsibility to encompass inherited sedimentations of meaning. It also entails a reach beyond the life of the individual: *an ethics of generations*. For if we truly take seriously the idea of the teleological character of reason, which unfolds in the perpetual development of generations bound by the infinite task, it seems that the full sense of ethical responsibility cannot be realized solely in the lifespan of the atomic individual. Rather, it is only through the life of the others that my life and my will is able to project a genuine horizon of infinite development. In other words, it is only the transcendental in-

[85] See especially HuaXXV: 285–287. Cf. HuaVIII: 16; HuaXXVII: 35.

[86] Steinbock 1995: 204.

[87] This idea is expressed quite clearly, for instance, in the introduction to the teleological-historical manner of investigation in the paragraph 15 of the *Crisis*: "If he is to be one who thinks for himself, an autonomous philosopher with the will to liberate himself from all prejudices, he must have the insight that all the things he takes for granted are *prejudices*, that all prejudices are obscurities arising out of a sedimentation of tradition […]." (**"Selbst**denker sein, autonomer Philosoph im Willen zur Befreiung von allen Vorurteilen, fordert von ihm die Einsicht, daß alle seine Selbstverständlichkeiten *Vorurteile* sind, daß alle Vorurteile Unklarheiten aus einer traditionalen Sedimentierung sind […]." HuaVI: 72).

tersubjectivity that can truly function as the *concrete subject* (Cf. Ch. 2.2) of ethical self-responsibility – a subject in which the play of relative ideals within the scope of infinite task can become a reality.

Thus, alongside with the genetic implications of the ethical imperative – I must understand my action according to the total horizon of my life – we can point towards the even more radical, *generative distention* of ethical life. "It belongs to the categorical imperative of the individual subject," Husserl writes in a manuscript, "that it must strive towards this higher form of community and this higher form of individual existence and individual life as a functionary of an ethical community."[88] For it is only within the life of a community that the motive of perpetual renewal – the horizon of the infinite task – can become a genuine reality; community is that entity which stands, so to speak, between the finite horizon of the human being and the absolute, all-embracing gaze of God. Community is, to put it simple, *infinity on earth*. Husserl writes:

> In the community with others, I have the endless horizon of productive activity, at least an empirically endless. I do not know how the world will stand ultimately, I do not know whether it will or must always be the same. I do not know, and we do not know whether a sudden world-catastrophe will make end of all striving. I know empirically that I will die, that my personal work and accomplishing will come to an end, [and] that my personal happiness which is given to me in success, is a passing fact. As being in human love, I find consolidation in the thought that my action is a part of a chain of action, which continues through the chain of generations in the context of an endless worldly reality, and that its value (*sein Gutes*) benefits others and is improved, increased and extended by them, benefitting also the forthcoming generations. The horizon is so wide and open, that I certainly have a relative satisfaction according to the possibility, that this horizon may also be finite. But I know nothing about it. This is something that my satisfaction does allow itself to grow complete. Would I believe beforehand in the finitude of the continuity of generations, it would not abolish my ethical striving, but I would have to value the world as being imperfect, though not as worthless, because it contains values that are

[88] "Es gehört zum kategorischen Imperativ des einzelnen Subjekts, diese höhere Gemeinschaftsform und diese höhere Form des Einzelseins und Einzellebens als Funktionär einer ethischen Gemeinschaft zu erstreben". Husserl, WL: 220.

> also developed; however, against the necessary ideal of improvement *in infinitum*, it has an infinite insufficiency.[89]

The "worth" of this world is not merely in the value it contains; it is, above all, in the possibility of development and progress which are made possible on the basis of the teleology of reason. It is only through others who continue my accomplishments by taking them up, or, by forming a critical relation to them, that my existence is able to situate itself within a genuine horizon of infinity. Thus, generativity is a necessary condition of a genuine ethical stance not merely in terms of a received background of sense and meaning but even more importantly, as that future horizon of possible development in which the "self-elucidation of reason" can become a reality.[90] I must strive to make the others free as well. Or, as Simone de Beauvoir later put it in her *Ethics of Ambiguity*: "It is only by prolonging itself through the freedom of others that [my freedom] manages to surpass death itself and to realize itself as an indefinite unity."[91] I know that I will die, but I also know that my resolutions and projects have the possibility of reaching beyond my finitude.

This horizon of infinity, however, is not given to me in full apodictic certainty – rather, it is only anticipated on the basis of the teleological ho-

[89] "Ich habe in Gemeinschaft mit den anderen einen endlosen Horizont fruchtbaren Wirkens, freilich einen empirisch unendlichen. Ich weiß nicht, wie es mit der Welt letztlich steht, ich weiß nicht, ob das immer so sein wird und so sein muss Ich weiß nicht und wir wissen nicht, ob nicht plötzlich eine Weltkatastrophe all dem Streben ein Ende machen wird. Ich weiß empirisch, dass ich sterben werde, dass meine persönliche Arbeit und Leistung ein Ende haben wird, mein persönliches Glück, wenn es mir im Erfolg zuteilwird, ein vorfibergehendes Faktum ist. Aber ich getröste mich leicht, wenn ich menschenliebend bin, im Gedanken, dass mein Wirken Glied einer Kette des Wirkens ist, das durch die Kette der Generationen im Rahmen der endlosen Weltwirklichkeit fortreicht, und dass sein Gutes anderen zugutekommt und durch sie gebessert, erhöht, erweitert, wieder den nachkommenden Generationen <zugutekommt>. Der Horizont ist ein so weiter und offener, dass ich eine gewisse relative Zufriedenheit noch habe auch angesichts der Möglichkeit, dass dieser Horizont vielleicht nur ein endlicher ist. Aber ich weiß darüber nichts. Das ist etwas, was meine Zufriedenheit nicht vollkommen werden lässt. Glaube ich im Voraus an die Endlichkeit der Kontinuität der Generationen, so hebt das nicht mein ethisches Streben auf, aber ich muss dann die Welt als unvollkommen werten. Nicht als wertlos, denn sie birgt Werte und noch sich steigerde Werte, aber sie hat gegenüber dem notwendigen Ideal einer Steigerung *in infinitum* einen unendlichen Mangel." Husserl, WL 229–230.

[90] Or, as Husserl seems to suggest in one of his *Kaizo* essays, the idea of a genuine rational humanity presents itself as a communal imperative (*Gemeinschaftsimperativ*) that "incorporates" the individual imperative within itself. HuaXXVII: 118

[91] Beauvoir 1994: 32.

rizon of life itself. The chain of actions reaching towards the infinite cannot be presupposed; it cannot be posited as being. Instead, it can only be projected; it can only be willed. Or, perhaps most importantly, we must ask whether this ideal can also be promoted in the world? Can I, through my thinking and acting, promote the realization of universal freedom and self-responsibility? This question leads us to the reinterpretation of the political dimension of Husserl's phenomenology.

4.3 Infinite Teleology and the Utopian Motive

For the Western tradition of political philosophy, the problem of legitimacy constitutes perhaps the single most important point of departure. From Plato to Hegel, and from Hobbes to Schmitt, it has been the guiding premise of this tradition that in order to become a part of a political community, one needs to give away a part of one's autonomy and submit oneself to the will of a higher entity, the political sovereignty. This submission of the will is of course true for most of our social relations – beginning with the relation between the parent and the child – however, in the political domain this renouncement is never simply justified on the basis of a natural relation.[92] While it is true that Plato treated his ideal *polis* as founded "according to nature" (*kata physin*), it could not uphold itself without the assistance of nature's fundamental antithesis, *nomos*, i.e., "law" or "custom".[93] Accordingly, the guiding question of Western political philosophy has been how to justify a form of political sovereignty with its respective institutional framework – how to legitimize the division between the ruler and the ruled. Especially for modern philosophy, this justification has been implemented according to three different elements: the authority of the sovereign (the ruler), state institutions with their disciplinary measures, and the legal framework that constitutes the

[92] See e.g. Hobbes' distinction between political and private in Leviathan, chapter XXII: "Of systems subordinate, some are political, and some private. Political (otherwise called bodies politic and persons in law) are those which are made by authority from the sovereign power of the Commonwealth. Private are those which are constituted by subjects amongst themselves, or by authority from a stranger." Hobbes 1996: 149.

[93] Plato, *Rep.* 428e

basic domain of action. For this reason, the main vocabulary of this tradition has consisted of different modes of political sovereignty (such as the "eternal" *auctoritas* and the temporal *potestas*), its different platforms (including the Greek *polis*, the modern nation-state, and different forms of supranational totalities), as well as the different types of law (international, constitutional, criminal etc.).

As many critics have noted, however, as a price of this development has been that we have perhaps failed to appreciate the very founding motive of political theory since Aristotle, namely, the perception according to which multiplicity is the constitutive feature of the body politic. As theorists such as Arendt, Rancière, Deleuze, and Laclau have emphasized, the Western tradition of political philosophy has not fully appreciated the multiformity and diversity of societal reality, but has treated these as hindrances with respect to a more uniform communal life. For most of our political visions, disagreements and conflicts that take place within the political domain have been something that we ought to get rid of: following Augustine's *Confessions*, we have perhaps come to consider a divided will as essentially impotent in comparison to a unanimous will. For this reason, as Foucault has argued, the Western political theory has been dominated by topics of sovereignty, governmentality and discipline; its basic question has been how to administer and control the diversity of societal existence. As he writes, we are still in need of a political philosophy that would not be centered on the problem of sovereignty, and consequently, of law and prohibition: "We need to cut off the king's head: in political theory that has still to be done."[94]

This cutting off, I argue, was also in the horizon of Husserl's phenomenological project. Through his reflections on social ethics and the teleological character of reason, Husserl wanted to question some of the central presuppositions of the political thinking of modernity – presuppositions that were defining the liberal tradition as well as its counterparts, the Kantian, Hegelian, and Marxist traditions. These presuppositions, I argue, related to at least three central features of our political tradition: the indispensability of the statist framework, the "utopian" dimension of modern political idealism, and the idea of political universalism. Although Husserl's personal relation to the political implications of phenomenology

[94] Foucault, 1980: 121.

was somewhat hesitant, I believe that his reflections point towards a novel understanding of political idealism, which, as in the case of individual ethics, would take its point of departure not from a pre-established ideal of conduct, but from the dialectical relation of "relative" and "absolute" ideals. Political thinking, in this phenomenological sense, ought to create relative ideals on the basis of contemporary situation and its possibilities; at the same time, it should understand itself in relation to the absolute ideal of the best possible community. In other words, political thinking should be *utopian* – but it should also beware of taking a particular utopia as the absolute and final form of righteous community.[95]

This dialectic, I argue, provides the basic model for a renewed understanding of universalism. As I argued in the previous part of this work, Husserl's understanding of the universalist motive of Greek philosophy was founded on the essentially pluralistic foundation of this idea, namely, on the perception according to which the cultural objectivities of individual homeworlds all referred back to their common foundation in the universal lifeworld (or earth-ground). This process of mediation, with the emergence of new idealities that were to be understood apart from the contingencies of natural language, introduced a new idea of communal co-operation that defined itself in regard to an infinitely open horizon of creation and production. Instead of a position that can be attained once and for all, universalism was to be acknowledged in terms of an infinite task that constantly calls forth a critical self-inspection in regard to the acquired tradition. Understood in its generative implications, this idea was to promote an idea of rational justification, which not only binds all rational subjects regardless of individual traditions and their particularities, but which promotes the idea of communal co-operation and personal self-responsibility beyond the division of home and alien.

This movement had also political implications. As I argued in part 3.4, philosophy, which grew out of the mutual co-operation of few "exceptional individuals", did not restrict its scope merely to the basic categories of reality, the essence of being and nature. It also brought within itself a transformation in the basic categories of social and political existence – "a *revolutionization* of the whole culture"[96]. Through the "political" reflections

[95] On the "utopian" dimension of Husserl's historical philosophy, see Hart 1989: 164ff.
[96] HuaVI: 325.

of the Classical authors, philosophy aimed at formulating the notion of an ideal *polis*, which would gain its legitimacy independent of any concrete political reality. This ideal aimed at a broader understanding of the fundamental principle of philosophy – the uncompromising self-responsibility of the human individual – and how this could be given a concrete platform in the body politic. For philosophy, *polis* became the site in which philosophical rationality becomes communal and historical – the site in which philosophy takes upon itself an abiding cultural form in the course of generations.

However, the communal praxis of philosophy defined itself also in a critical relation towards the political domain. For the Greeks, *polis* was not conceived merely as a domain of co-operation but also of exclusion – a particular political unit (such as Athens) understood itself essentially in relation to its outside (Sparta, Persia etc.). A political community without borders was basically inconceivable, although these borders were not necessarily given a clear territorial outline as in the case of modern nation-states.[97] As Carl Schmitt put it in his *The Nomos of the Earth* (*Nomos der Erde*), it is actually possible to conceive "land-appropriation" (*Landnahme*) as the primal act of political institutions (what Schmitt calls "law" in general) – something which is able to spatialize the distinction between friend and enemy.[98] Philosophy, motivated by what Husserl called the disempowerment (*Entkräftung*) of particular traditions, gave birth to the insistence to overcome all "natural" divisions between "familiar" and "strange", that is, to abstract from all traditionally given limits of *homeworld* and *alien-world*. Although several philosophers of the Classical era still confined themselves to traditional divisions between the "autochthonous" Greeks and the slave-like Barbarians (*barbaroi*), the division between familiar and strange could no longer be defined solely on natural terms, but in terms of different "laws", "customs", "mentalities", and so on. Especially from the Hellenistic period onwards, the traditional notion of *polis* turned out to be insufficient in delineating the new political ideals of universal philosophy. *Polis* became a hindrance in the sense that it upholds those structures which prevent human beings from relating to the one world, and which separates them from one another on seemingly "natural" grounds. "If the

[97] Polignac 1995: 9.
[98] Schmitt 1997: 17.

intellectual capacity is common to all," Marcus Aurelius reasoned in his *Meditations*, "common too is the reason, which makes us rational beings":

> If so, we share reason which tells us what should and should not happen in common. If so, the law is common. If so, we are citizens. If so, we are fellow members of a republic. If so, the cosmos is like a city – for in what other single polity can the whole human race belong in common?[99]

Despite the relative success of Hellenistic *cosmopolitanism*, the problem of exclusion remained an essential feature of the succeeding tradition. The two most important civilizational movements that emerged on the basis of the Greek intellectual heritage – Christianity and Islam – defined themselves in clear relation to the division between home and alien. Augustine divided the human race according to two "societies of human beings", the Christian and the non-Christian, "one of which is predestined to reign with God for all eternity, the other doomed to undergo eternal punishment with the devil."[100] Correspondingly, the Islamic tradition conceived the world as split into two regions, the "House of Islam" (*Dar-al-Islam*) and the "House of war" (*Dar al-Harb*). The modern nation-states merely succeeded better in what had been the original inclination of these movements, that is, to substantiate the essential connection between cultural, political, and territorial limits.

Although Husserl characterized his own philosophical work as "completely apolitical"[101], the somewhat ambiguous relation of phenomenology to the political domain was something that characterized his work until the very last stage. In terms of method, phenomenology remained essentially as an individual undertaking in the sense that it could only be carried through by the radical self-responsibility of the phenomenologist; however, as a mere project of the self, phenomenology was doomed to remain an abstract endeavor. As I argued in the previous chapter, the *teleological* dimension of philosophical undertaking had revealed the necessity of rendering the idea of self-responsibility into a generative notion, something that realizes itself in the perpetual course of generations through critique and renewal. The principle of philosophical rationality was to be given

[99] Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* IV.4
[100] Augustine, *De civ.* XV.i
[101] This letter dates to 1935, and it is quoted in Schuhmann 1988: 18–19.

both a communal as well as a historical form that would have secured its continuation within the infinite horizon of humankind. Thus we can ask: If Husserl's ultimate motivation was to delineate the normative ideal of a community, how could this idea be conceived apart from the political domain? How could it be implemented apart from political or institutional transformations?

Perhaps Husserl's own self-image of himself as an apolitical thinker reveals something about the general understanding of politics within contemporary times. In Husserl's own time, as today, the notion of the "political" refers first and foremost to concrete societal and institutional practices and conventions: the political relevance of an idea relies on its capability to concretely shape the practices and institutions of existing societal reality. As Hermann Heller, one of the leading political theorists of the Weimar era (and a contemporary of Husserl's) put it in his *Sozialismus und Nation*, "according to its goals, all politics is politics of the state (*Staatspolitik*)" because it has to channel its interests through governmental "law" and "institutions of power" (*Machtapparat*).[102] Politics equals with governmentality and it deals with the institutions of the state. Phenomenology, which was supposed to nurture the motive of individual autonomy and self-responsibility, could not execute this task by resorting to the traditional understanding of politics as subordination to the sovereign; instead, it needed to rethink the foundation of political institutions in align with the idea of universal self-responsibility.

Moreover, for modern philosophy the very idea of political philosophy with normative implications seems suspect. As Leo Strauss has put it, we have come to consider political philosophy in the classical sense as something outdated, something that can only be replaced by political science in the sense of value-free investigation of societal phenomena, or correspondingly, by the concept of *ideology*.[103] According to the latter stance, a political philosophy with normative implications is impossible, because even the basic categories and concepts of the political domain are "contested" or "biased", that is, they serve the interests of a particular interest, class, or advocacy group. A "transcendental" or "eidetic" study of political ideals would thus cave in to the fundamental "ideological" fal-

[102] Heller 1931: 72.
[103] Strauss 1964: 6ff.

lacy, that is, the *de-politization* of the political phenomena (for instance, the existing structures of power) by presenting them as something perennial and unchangeable. Hence, the key problem was: how to promote a phenomenological social philosophy with normative implications that would be free of any particular ideological commitments?

The Problem of State

In search of the "political" dimension of Husserl's phenomenology, many commentators have taken their point of departure from the occasional remarks concerning idea of the state (*Staat*).[104] As I already pointed out in the previous parts of the work, Husserl's relation to this idea was basically twofold – although Husserl considered the state as a natural platform of human sociality, he nevertheless acknowledged a certain active element in its foundation. The state was, as Husserl put it, the indispensable framework of human community, something that arises naturally from the interaction of human individuals ("*ein Staat erwachsend aus einer natürlichen Abstammungsgemeinschaft*").[105] On the other hand, he discussed the also in terms of an "artificial" (*künstlich*) creation, which is upheld by political institutions, norms, and organizations of power. This duality was reflected also in other distinctions: Although the statist institutions provided the basic platform for the emergence of the "will of the state" (*Staatswille*), which is able to constitute the unity of a "personality of a higher order"[106] – the state fulfills its task also through the "subordination of [individual] wills" through power.[107] Moreover, Husserl conceived the state both as a domain "rights" (*Rechte*) as well as "duties" (*Pflichte*), and it seems that Husserl's descriptions of the state did not amount to a univocally "positive" or "negative" account; the state serves many purposes.[108]

However, from the viewpoint of the *teleological* development of culture, the state acquired for itself a central function. In few of his manuscripts, Husserl conceived the "state" as the very condition of a communal-

[104] This is true of especially Karl Schuhmann's work (1988), but the statist perspective is also emphasized by Eley (1988) and Hart (1992a).
[105] HuaXIII: 110
[106] HuaXIV: 405.
[107] HuaXIII: 110
[108] This point is emphasized especially by Schuhmann 1998: 15ff.

generative historicity – "the necessarily first and abiding theme for the writing of history."[109] It is only within a lasting framework of communal interaction that human culture can acquire for itself a generative continuity. Here, the notion of "state" was to be understood as a general concept, in a broader sense than a mere *polis* or "nation-state". A family, for instance, can of course renew itself on the course of generations, but it cannot replace its members in a similar way than a state with abiding constitutions and institutions (if the president dies, a new one has to be elected etc.).[110] However, it is also through "state" that a particular homeworld is established as a fixed totality, which separates itself from the alien as a distinct "cultural territory" (*Kulturterritorium*). For a nomadic people, the division between familiar and strange is essentially a transitory structure, but for a state it is turned into a geographical distinction: the homeworld is appropriated as a fixed "geo-historical horizon".[111]

Thus, we encounter a central problem in the relation between philosophy and state: If the birth of philosophy signified a "revolution" in the manner of how humankind creates culture in the generative context, it seems clear that it needed to presuppose the statist framework in order to realize itself. Further, if philosophy was to bring about the normative ideal of culture which abstains from all divisions between home and alien, how could it still hold on to the statist framework which upholds these distinctions? If philosophy was to bring about the idea of a personality of a higher order with a common purpose, how could it do this without the subordination of individual wills? This is a question that has been raised, for instance, by James G. Hart in his *The Person and the Common Life*:

> From the point of view of a "pure consideration of essences" as well as from that of concrete factual possibilities [...] Husserl raises a series of fundamental issues: To what extent is the communitarian ideal to be realized through "the authority of free reason and through the rank of scholars and [...] universal education founded in a community of wills?" Does such a community need an "imperial community" in the form of an organization of power, an institution of domination and servitude, which as centralizing force

[109] "Der Staat ist das erste Thema der universalen Geschichtsschreibung [...]." HuaXV: 409. See also Hart 1992a: 377–386.
[110] "Stirbt der Beamte, so wird ein anderer ernannt" HuaXIII: 102.
[111] HuaXV: 206; HuaXV: 411

> binds all the wills into itself and arranges the life of each person in terms of prescribed limits and functions within which each is free to choose. Thus, the basic theoretical issue is whether it is an essential human possibility to form a community of life which approximates the ideal of an ethical community of will [...] through autonomous free reason and rational action or whether the human communities require the means of an *imperium*, a state?[112]

In the context of *Kaizo* essays, Husserl provides us with some answers to these questions. Against his earlier reflections on the "eternal justification" of (the European) nation-states, Husserl raised the critical question of the necessity for a "gradual dismantling of the state organizations of power" (*allmählicher Abbau der staatlichen Machtorganisation*)[113] that would follow the demand of a universal self-responsibility: in a world in which human beings are forced to make themselves comply with the authority of a sovereign power – and in which human beings are dissociated from each other on cultural, racial, or other grounds – the ethical ideal of a universal and autonomous community cannot realize itself. Although Husserl raised the possibility of "supranation" (*Übernation*) and "suprastate" (*Überstaat*) that would function as the "material" equivalents of the ethical ideal of universal humanity, his idea of a universally encompassing community (*Allgemeinschaft*) stood in constant tension with the horizon of the state (*Staatshorizont*) with its coercive means.[114]

As Hart is right to emphasize, the political alternatives of phenomenology do not reside merely in the statist and non-statist alternatives – the existence or non-existence of a state – but even more importantly, in its *mode* or *type*. If we take that a necessary condition of a "just" political institution would be one which corresponds with the idea of an autonomous individual as well as the collective horizon of the community, we are still left with a number of concrete organizations and practices – human rights, parliamentarism, participatory democracy etc. – through which these ideas could be realized. As Hart emphasizes, with regard to the representational model of modern democratic nation-states, often characterized by a strong political elite and a top-down governmentality (what Husserl calls the "imperialist organized will" or "central will"), Husserl's

[112] Hart 1992a: 387.
[113] HuaXXVII: 57.
[114] HuaXXVII: 58–59.

delineation of the ideal community ought to be understood in terms of a "communist unity of wills", which constantly negotiates the common will of the collective.[115] Instead of subordination, this type of community would found itself on voluntary consent – instead of the aspirations of isolated individuals, its decisions would be guided by the common aspiration of the "community of will".

As I argued in the previous part of this work, Husserl credited Plato for articulating the necessary "archontic" or "hegemonic" role of philosophy in regard to the political domain.[116] For Plato, this role was to be executed through the "conjunction (*sympestē*) of [...] political power and philosophic intelligence"[117] so that either philosophers become rulers, or that rulers begin to take seriously the pursuit of philosophy. Here, Husserl's conclusion was more subtle. Although the phenomenologist was called for the "guidance of humanity" (*Unterweisung der Menschheit berufen*), this did not entail the conflation of philosophical and political power: the philosopher is the "functionary" (*Funktionär*) or "spiritual organ" of humanity, which promotes the realization of autonomy and self-responsibility within the overall domain of culture. Philosophy ought to promote the idea of a "community of will" (*Willesgemeinschaft*) which would not be centered on a governing "central will" but that would realize itself through the critical reflexivity of individual vocations.

In this regard, Husserl's phenomenology seemed to go beyond the traditional understanding of political philosophy as a domain of sovereignty. The ethical reformers Husserl most appreciated were not political revolutionaries in the traditional sense: instead of Hegel's world-historical figures (like Julius Caesar, Naopleon etc.), Husserl's appreciation was targeted to persons such as Jesus, Buddha, or even George Bernhard Shaw, who all emphasized the self-reflexive capabilities of the human individual as the basis of political and social transformation.[118] Political and societal institutions can and must change, but this transformation must be equaled by individual development.

[115] HuaXXVII: 52–53. On this point, see also Hart 1992a: 384; Buckley 1998: 41; Donohoe 2004: 140.
[116] HuaVII: 14.
[117] Plato, *Rep.* 473d.
[118] See esp. HuaXXVII: 122–126. Cf. Depraz 2000.

In this regard, the most important political defect of modern naturalistic psychology – most evident in the tradition of atomic liberalism – was its inability to account for the idea of human development through the critical and reflexive capabilities of the human individual. As John Dewey once put it, the underlying philosophy and psychology of early liberalist tradition took its point of departure from "a conception of individuality as something ready-made, already possessed, and needing only the removal of certain legal restrictions to come into full play."[119] Accordingly, the great challenge of Husserl's phenomenology was to challenge not only the imminent threat naturalistic psychology with regard to the idea of individual responsibility, but with regard to its political implications. If we take that human being is essentially incapable of developing, then our political institutions necessarily take the role of governing the existing tendencies. However, if we subscribe to the idea that moral development is possible, then it seems that our political institutions can acquire for themselves a radically different function – that of securing the development of the human individual. According to this view, we need proper systems of education, human rights, social planning etc. exactly because they make possible the idea of individual transformation. I will return to this point in the last section of this chapter.

The idea of human transformation constitutes one of the unique characteristics of Husserl's "political idealism". As I would argue, this idealism was not restricted merely to the idea of "best possible" institutions, the problem of state and its legitimacy; instead, these questions constituted only a regional problem of the political domain. In addition to the statist and "static" questions of political ontology, Husserl's teleological reflections pointed towards a radical *dynamic account of political idealism*, one, that was to comply with the idea of individual and social development on the basis of the open and infinite horizon of philosophical truth. The very defect of our Western tradition of political philosophy was that it had been unable to conceive the political domain as something that needs to allow change and transformation to take place.

Already in the context of the *Kaizo* pointed out that the "ethical idea of community" (*ethische Gemeinschaftsidee*) – a community that is "abso-

[119] Dewey 1987: 30.

lutely valuable"[120] – ought to be understood as a "developmental system" (*Werdenssystem*).[121] Thus, instead of a predelineated ideal, this community was to be understood as the social counterpart of the ethical human being – living according to the idea of renewal – that finds its genuine essence only through a critical relation towards the acquired habitualities and capacities. In an appendix to the lecture course on *Erste Philosophie* (written in 1924), this idea is expressed in its full clarity:

> It belongs to the idea of an absolutely valuable community, that it cannot be realized *a priori* in a static manner, but only through a valuable *becoming* towards the infinite. [This is to say] that these two related ideas belong *a priori* together: the infinite pole-idea of absolutely realizable value – the value of a community that constantly actuates itself in a thorough and absolutely rational manner – and the idea of an infinite progress of perfection that corresponds with it. So, it is to be understood that both of these correlative ideas must be realized in the rational community of the highest form of becoming, that is, in the community that not only lives in a rational manner, but which has the absolute, best possible form of development against the absolute static idea.[122]

As Husserl emphasizes, the "static" question on the righteous form of community constitutes only a partial problem of the idea of an absolutely valuable community. As in the case of individual ethics, the mere idea of ethical justification in terms of a universal imperative fails to appreciate the dynamic-genetic character of human life – that our capabilities of reflection are always bound by the concrete historical and social circumstances – so it is with the idea of community. Our societal-political reflection needs to take its point of departure from a critical reflection targeted towards existing institutions, norms, and practices; at the same time, it

[120] HuaXXVII: 53.
[121] HuaXXVII: 55.
[122] "Gehört zur Idee einer absolut wertvollen Gemeinschaft aber dies, daß sie a priori nicht statisch verwirklicht sein kann, sondern nur ins Unendliche wertvoller Werden kann, oder gehören vielmehr a priori zwei aufeinander bezogene Ideen hier zusammen: die im Unendlichen liegende Polidee absolut verwirklichten Wertes - des Wertes einer durchgängig und absolut vernünftig sich ständig betätigenden Gemeinschaft - und die Idee eines unendlichen Progressus der Vervollkommnung gegen diese Idee, so ist einzusehen, daß diese korrelativen Ideen beide in einer vernünftigen Gemeinschaft höchster Werdensform verwirklicht sein müßten, nämlich einer Gemeinschaft, die zwar nicht absolut vernünftig lebt, aber die absolute bestmögliche Entwicklungsform gegen die absolute statische Idee hin hat." HuaVIII: 200

must acknowledge their essentially finite and one-sided character with regard to the absolute ideal of a completely rational community. "True humanity", writes Husserl, "requires a perpetual struggle against sinking into the lazy nest of conventionality or, what is essentially the same, living in lazy reason instead of living a life of authentic originality [of evidence]."[123] Hence, although the "absolutely valuable" community ought to be understood as an infinite "pole-idea", this does not make it completely unreachable. The absolute ideal can be realized within this world, though not as a static ideal but as a temporal process. This is to say, that the normative ideal relies essentially on *transformation* and *generation* in the "infinity of generations being renewed in the spirit of ideas".[124]

Ever since the emergence of political philosophy in the tradition of European-Occidental thought, the ideas of change and transformation have appeared problematic. Even though the idea of transformation was the key premise of political philosophy – that human communities do not exist "naturally", but they can be reconstituted on the basis of rational insight – it seems that the political ideals themselves were conceived as immune to change and transformation. As I argued in part 3, Plato based his societal reforms on a political *epoché* that refused to take cue on the existing political reality – however, he based his "figure of governance" (*schēma tēs politeias*) on the heavenly model of ideal *polis*, a model that was eternal and immovable.[125] After returning to the cave of everyday existence, the primary task of philosopher was to implement this immovable ideal to existing political reality. Once established, the order of the ideal *polis* was to be secured and protected against transformation. This is why Plato came up with the "noble lie" of the different metals of the soul as the foundation of societal order: because the original condition of the human being consists of being of a certain natural type (gold, silver, iron, brass), which needs to be protected against diffusion, the societal order of different classes needs to be kept intact.[126] For Plato, this demand concerned especially the ruling class, i.e., the philosophers. Because "in

[123] "[…] wahres Menschendasein fordert den ewigen Kampf gegen das Versinken in das Faulbett der Konventionalität oder, was im Wesen dasselbe, Leben in der faulen Vernunft statt eines Lebens aus echter Ursprünglichkeit […]" HuaXIV: 231. See Hart 1992a: 409.
[124] HuaVI: 322.
[125] *Rep.* 592b. See also *Timaeus* 30c-34c.
[126] *Rep.* 415a-c.

every form of government change (*metaballei*) takes its start from the ruling class itself'"[127], the community of philosophers was to be kept intact of foreign influences.

To follow Hannah Arendt's argument, the political philosophy of the West has perhaps not fully acknowledged the possibility of genuine action.[128] Transformations that proceed without a predetermined *telos* are frightful, and they do not seem to equal to the model of divine reason. As Aristotle put it, "in all places there is only one form of government that is natural, namely, the best form"[129] – and that despite the differences of culture and level of civilization that prevail between individual societies, all would find their contentment in this singular ideal. Philosophy is afraid of beginnings without an established direction, and for this reason, also the Greek political philosophy replaced action with control and governance: the genuine politician is the one who can rise beyond appearances and changing situation; the one who sees what everyone needs and craves in his or her life.

This fear of change is perhaps most evident in the tradition of *political utopianism*. Since Thomas More's *Utopia* (originally published in 1515), it has been an inherent feature of Western utopian literature that it has often placed the ideal community outside the civilized world, that is, outside history as such. As in the case of More's island of Utopia or Jonathan Swift's *Gullivers Travels* (originally published in 1726), the ideal society is discovered as a lucky mistake of a fortunate traveler. Because the target of these fantasies resides outside temporal development as such – nobody knows how they arrived at their current condition – they are also immune to transformation. The ideals do not develop, they do not change; instead, their invariance must be secured through geographical isolation (e.g. islands) or even material transmutation. As several dystopian novelists (Huxley, Orwell) have pointed out, eugenics is indeed the material counterpart of political idealism – nothing new shall be born.[130]

[127] *Rep.* 545d.

[128] See e.g. Arendt 1958: 175ff. "The substitution of making for acting and the concomitant degradation of politics into a means to obtain an allegedly "higher" end […] in the modern age the productivity and progress of society is as old as the tradition of political philosophy." (Arendt 1958: 229).

[129] *Nic. Eth.* 1135a4-5

[130] Of course, ever since the publication of Louis-Sébastian Mercier's *L'An 2440* (*The Year 2440*, published in 1770) the utopian tradition of the West has ascribed to the modern

It is exactly here, I believe, that Husserl's phenomenology provides a radical counter-strategy to the classical understanding of political idealism. To say that the normative ideal of a community can be understood as a "valuable *becoming* towards the infinite […] as the infinite pole-idea of absolutely realizable value" means that the ideal cannot be understood in terms of a particular political form – a Platonic *schēma*, Aristotelian "natural" form, Kantian cosmopolitan community etc. – which univocally delineates the best type of governance. As in the case of individual ethics, the ideal can only be anticipated in an undefined generality, for our understanding of the "best possible" is always constituted on the basis of a relative situation and its possibilities. From the Husserlian point of view, what the traditional political philosophy has lacked is exactly the distinction between "relative" and "absolute" ideals of perfection. Instead, it has always absolutized a particular relative form, an idea of *polis* or a nation-state, or a particular relation of production. However, these two ideals need to be kept apart: as equal to the absolute ideals of best possible world and best possible humanity there are the factical ideals of this world and the factically determined goals.[131]

To think politically means that one takes responsibility for the factical ideals of this world – of concrete political institutions, societal practices, relations of production etc. But it also means taking responsibility for the generative context of individual homeworlds with their unique characteristics. This is what Husserl, in his lectures on Fichte, means with the idea of "the noble politician who finds his blessedness by working on the preservation and formation of the order of an ideal community in accord with the particular ideas which are normative for this community."[132]

teleological concept of history, according to which the ideal is found at the end of (progressive) human history. However, even the "temporal utopias" (to use the classification of Karl Mannheim) of modern times have often found a way to protect themselves against transformation. In the case of Mercier's utopia, the radically progressive character of the ideal society was secured by eradicating most of its written historical heritage, which was deemed as useless and immoral. One can clearly observe the basic idea: the good must equal with natural and atemporal. Or, as in the case of the first American utopian novel *Equality; or, A History of Lithconia* (which appeared in 1837 by an anonymous author, probably John Lithgow) which granted the political power in the hands old-age pensioners in order to protect itself against new openings.

[131] HuaXXXVII: 320.

[132] "Endlich auch der edle Politiker, der seine Seligkeit dann findet, an der Ordnung sozialer Gemeinschaft nach den für sie maßgebenden besonderen Idealen erhaltend und gestaltend zu arbeiten […]" HuaXXV: 289.

Thus, the genuine politician must be guided by the idea of best possible community; however, s/he must be equipped with the reflexivity towards the peculiar characteristics of his or her homeworld (its specific norms and practices). This does not entail that these norms and practices should be simply preserved in the name of conservatism; rather, it puts forward an imperative to take a critical and reflexive stance towards the particular institutions of a particular homeworld. Political thinking may be inspired by absolute ideals; but it operates on the level of relative idals, of concrete practices,institutions, norms, rights, duties, and so on.[133]

[133] In his 1978–79 Collège de France lecture course *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Foucault points towards an interesting connection between Husserl and the early German neo-liberalist economic theory, especially the representatives of the so-called Freiburg School of National Economy (*Freiburger Schule der Nationalökonomie*). (See especially the "Lecture Five" of the series in Foucault 2008: 101–121). This school, represented by economists such as Wilhelm Röpke and Walter Eucken (the son of philosopher Rudolf Eucken, a friend of Husserl's), promoted what was then called the economic policy of *ordoliberalism*, i.e. the idea of free market-economy secured by state institutions. This policy, as it was discussed and promoted since the beginning of the 1930s onwards, was of course in clear contradiction with the economic planning of the National Socialist movement, which relied heavily on "Keynesian" economic policies, e.g. heavy government spending (i.e. resuscitation), price control, nationalization of businesses, and so on. Although the success of ordoliberalism was rather minor during the Nazi Regime – Röpke, for one, was forced into exile in 1933 – it served as an important influence for the so-called Austrian School of neoliberalism, represented by Carl Menger, Ludwig von Mises ja Friedrich Hayek. As Foucault points out, both Röpke and Eucken were influenced by Husserl's phenomenological method, and employed it to promote their idea of *laissez-faire* economic policies. Whereas the liberalism of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took their point of departure from the existing institutions of market-economy – of exchange and competition – and tried to deduce the principles of free capitalism from these institutions, the ordoliberalists treated this deduction as an example of what Foucault calls "naïve naturalism". Instead, and here Foucault detects the influence of Husserl, they aimed at arriving at their ideal through an "eidetic reduction", i.e. by abstaining from the concrete features of established economies. Ordoliberalism treated competition and exchange not as natural categories of human interaction, but as normative ideals of economic rationalism, which can and ought to be imposed against the "natural" state of economic interchange.

As Foucault explains: "For what in fact is competition? It is absolutely not a given of nature. The game, mechanisms, and effects of competition which we identify and enhance are not at all natural phenomena; competition is not the result of a natural interplay of appetites, instincts, behavior, and so on. In reality, the effects of competition ate due only to the essence that characterizes and constitutes it. The beneficial effects of competition are not due to a pre-existing nature, to a natural given that it brings with it. They are due to a formal privilege. Competition is an essence. Competition is an *eidos*. Competition is a principle of formalization. Competition has an internal logic; it has its own structure. […] Just as for Husserl a formal structure is only given to intuition under certain conditions, in the same way competition as an essential economic logic will only appear and-produce its effects under certain conditions which have to be carefully and artificially constructed. […] Competition is therefore an historical objective of governmental art and not a natural

In terms of political development, relative goals and ideals are at the same time necessary and dangerous. They are necessary, first of all, in order to bring change – cultural, social, and economic – into the world. Without concrete transformations in the common world of human beings (e.g. practices, institutions) the absolute ideal of reason remains an empty idea. Once appropriated, however, these relative accomplishments have a tendency of becoming absolute. Take for instance, the example of European/Western nation-states. From the viewpoint of collective decision-making, the nation-states are still perhaps the most important domains for the formation of a general will. Although bound by several supranational treatises, it is the nation-states that can implement legislative measures that control the distribution of material resources, or, that can make a difference in regard to environmental issues. This is not to say, however, that these factors would constitute the actual justification of nation-states. Throughout their history – and we feel this especially in today's Europe – the justification of nation-states is essentially bound to the emotive enticement of nationalism, which upholds itself through a series of cultural and political symbols, concepts and practices, which are often taken over uncritically. Nation equals with a more or less homogenous people, often conceived in ethnic (or "cultural") terms. What we perhaps feel today is that the affective allure of nationalism – what Husserl would definitely

given that must be respected." (Foucault 2008: 120.) Although Foucault merely entertains this connection, he treats it as an example of the idea of the all-embracing *biopolitical governance*, which is characteristic of the unfolding of the 20th century politics. In this regard, phenomenology would contribute to what Foucault considers as the basic fallacy of the liberal (and especially neoliberal) economism of the 20th century, the application of a rational ideal of governance that can merely be *implemented* into the existing reality without considering the structural imbalances of the societal order, for instance, what Marx called the original accumulation of capital. The existing societal reality is always that of imbalance of resources – as Cervantes put it, a world of Have's and Havent's – but we think we can do away with this discrepancy by implementing a model of equal competition and exchange.

However, as we have seen, this is not at all what Husserl had in mind. Although his political philosophy amounted to a peculiar form of idealism, which does not merely reside in the existing reality of human communities, this did not entail a dismissal of the original discrepancies of possibilities that prevail within particular societies. (Cf. HuaXXVII: 10). What Foucault fails to accentuate is that Husserl did not arrive at his normative ideal through eidetic reduction that could be accomplished once and for all; instead, the absolute ideal is fundamentally an open task, which can be approached only from a particular relative situation. As an *eidos* of communal life, the best possible must remain inexact, incomplete, for phenomenology discovers it's the normative ideal of community only as a perpetual process.

call "secondary sensuality" (*sekundäre Sinnlichkeit*)[134] – hinders the creative potential of our political thinking, which should respond more acutely to the problems of the globalized world: mass migration, statelessness, the exploitation of cheap labor force. For many, the nation-states are still the absolute and only possible framework for a political community, and because of their allure, we lack the vision to develop institutions and practices that would promote the idea of common responsibility beyond the limits of individual nations. Is not the current crisis of universal political institutions – international law, criminal courts – at least partially due to the absolutization of the idea of the nation-state?

Speaking from this Husserlian perspective, the political relevance of philosophy could be conceived in two regards. First, philosophy should be *utopian*, but only in the sense of necessary idealism: instead of merely resigning with the existing institutions of power, it should take its point of departure from the idea of best possible community. This means that philosophy should be *active* as well as *creative* in its insistence to originate new practices and institutions that could promote the realization of the universal self-responsibility. But even more importantly, philosophy should constantly remind us of the finitude and one-sidedness of our relative ideals. Following Jean Baudrillard, philosophy should be critical towards "achieved utopias"[135] – it should prevent us from taking the existing political institutions as the only possible alternative. This entails that our political thinking should always situate itself within the horizon of infinite development: it should conceive the absolute ideal, not in terms of a Platonic *schema* or Hegelian *telos*, but in terms of interplay between absolute and relative ideals. Our utopian thinking, I suggest, should be fundamentally *dynamic* instead of static.

Here, interestingly, we find the antecedent of this idea in Marx's works. Although the traditional understanding of Marx's political thinking points towards a "substantial" definition of communism – beginning with the "short-term" demands of abolition of land-property and inheritance, the centralization of credit, national infrastructure and the means of production in *The Communist Manifesto* – we may also discover another current that delineates another kind of definition. In *The German Ideology*

[134] HuaXXVII: 110.
[135] Baudrillard 1988: 73ff.

Marx points towards an understanding of communism, not as an "ideal" or "state of affairs", but as "an actual movement which abolishes the present state of affairs."[136] What he means is that the "utopian" element of communism can only be understood as a critical transformation of the present moment, which realistically delineates its possible horizons of transformation. It represents a critical alternative to the early utopian socialism, for which, to follow the ideas of Charles Fourier (1772–1837), even the sea would lost its salt and turn into pink lemonade.[137] "From the moment the working-men class movement became real," Marx writes in *The Civil War in France*, "the phantastic utopias evanesced, not because the working class had given up the end aimed at by these Utopists, but because they had found the real means to realize them." Thus, the fixed utopias were replaced by a "real insight into the historic conditions of the movement."[138] As Marx put it in another essay:

> They have no ready-made utopias to introduce *par decret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realize, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant.[139]

Here, I believe, Marx's insight is conversant with Husserl's position: utopias can only be delineated as the critique of the present moment. The utopia should not be fixed, for nobody really knows how the world will look like after the overturning of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. What we know, however, is that we cannot live in a world that is fundamentally immoral and without justification; therefore, the mere idea of change is the necessary point of departure for utopian consciousness. We find a similar train of thought in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), which alerts from delineating the essence of sexual difference on the basis of existing structures of power that are founded on one-sided subordination. "When we abolish the slavery of half of humanity, together with the whole system of hypocrisy that it implies," she writes, "then the division

[136] Marx and Engels 1970: 57.
[137] Beecher 1986: 485.
[138] See also Wood 2004: 54.
[139] Marx 1994: 308.

of humanity will reveal its genuine significance and the human couple will find its true form."[140] The utopia of the genuine equality of sexes cannot be predelineated in its overarching sense, for our idea of what it means to be a man or a woman is defined by the existing relations of power. For this reason, the utopia can only be anticipated in its formality – it must be understood as the critique of the present moment.

While I believe that the Husserlian understanding of political philosophy deserves to be called idealism, this is not to say that it would completely distinguish itself from the material world. As I pointed out in the previous section, Husserl conceived the horizon of infinite development not only as something which unfolds in the experience of the human individual but as something which is realized by the generative development of the community. This entails that I am responsible not only for my own actions but also for that generative horizon which makes possible the continuity and renewal of human culture. This generative horizon, however, is not sustained by mere ideas – it also rests essentially on material conditions. To follow Hannah Arendt's argument, the political community is sustained, first of all, by *natality*, which endows the community the ability to produce new members that can sustain the human culture through labor, work, and action. Natality, Arendt writes, "is the central category of political thought"[141] not only because it provides the material conditions for the continuation of the common life but because it represents the basic character of human life as political, that is, as free to begin its projects within the historically and culturally specific situation.

Moreover, the horizon of human development is sustained also by the material conditions of the lifeworld, which, as we have come to learn, are also finite and insecure. For instance, the question of the vulnerability of our natural environment (climate change, finitude of natural resources etc.) was neither in Marx's nor in Husserl's scope, but it definitely is in our horizon – and painstakingly so. What we have come to realize is that without certain changes in our relation to the environing world, the horizon of infinite development will no longer in front of us. This entails that we need to take a renewed stance towards the very condition of our common life: the earth.

[140] Beauvoir 1968: 731.
[141] Arendt 1958: 9.

Universalism: dynamism, pluralism, openness

Let us return to the question of universalism. As I have argued throughout this work, Husserl's interest in the problematic of Europe was not motivated solely by the fate of a particular continent or a civilization but by the promise of an idea – an idea of a universal, rational culture. Philosophy, which founded itself on a peculiar relativization of individual homeworlds and their generative traditions, aimed at extending the ideas of self-responsibility and autonomy beyond all traditionally given boundaries of home and alien. By uncovering the common *Allwelt* that lies at the foundation of individual traditions, philosophy gave way to a completely new idea of cultural criticism – one, that aimed at showing the necessarily one-sided character of cultural accomplishments. Although this idea realized itself primarily in the form of theoretical co-operation, that of "working with one another and for one another, offering one another helpful criticism,"[142] its scope was not restricted merely to this. As Husserl put it in another manuscript, it is actually possible to consider the Roman Empire as the first concrete instantiation of the idea of Europe – an instantiation that was the first to genuinely transfer the motive of universalism into the domain of political historicity.[143]

However, as many scholars have noted, it is exactly here that Husserl's analyses turned out to be inadequate. Despite his good intentions, Husserl did not fully acknowledge the problematic nature of the ethical and political implications of universal philosophy; instead, Husserl was careless in his remarks concerning the self-evident "normative appeal" of the European culture, or, what he once called the spectacle of Europeanization.[144] As Steinbock argues, although Husserl's generative phenomenology allowed

[142] HuaVI: 334.
[143] HuaXXIX: 15ff.
[144] See Introduction. Cf. HuaVI: 320: "[In our Europe] there is something unique here that is recognized in us by all other human groups, too, something that, quite apart from all considerations of utility, becomes a motive for them to Europeanize themselves even in their unbroken will to spiritual self-preservation; whereas we, if we understand ourselves properly, would never Indianize ourselves, for example." ("Es [an unserem Europa] liegt darin etwas Einzigartiges, das auch allen anderen Menschheitsgruppen an uns empfindlich ist als etwas, das, abgesehen von allen Erwägungen der Nützlichkeit, ein Motiv für sie wird, sich im ungebrochenen Willen zu geistiger Selbsterhaltung doch immer zu europäisieren, während wir, wenn wir uns recht verstehen, uns zum Beispiel nie indianisieren werden."

for non-foundational reading of the home and alien (they are "co-constitutive"), his idea of liminal transgression served as an implicit justification to European expansionism. According to Steinbock, Husserl tended "to expand an immanent ethical reform of this [European] homeworld to an all-encompassing world, 'one humanity,' 'one normality,' and hence to a ubiquitous homeworld."[145] What this approach failed to appreciate was the inherent "axiological asymmetry" of the home and the alien, the essential irreversibility of their perspectives. Thus, Husserl's insistence of creating a universal ethical humanity would actually entail the "destruction of generativity, of the becoming of homeworld/alienworld."[146] This critique is also echoed in Derrida's analysis of Husserl's interpretation of philosophy as a "universal project of a will to deracination" – a project that aimed at "liberating itself, from the start, from its linguistic, territorial, ethnic and cultural limitations."[147]

For Steinbock as well as for Derrida, these reflections are not merely of exegetical interest. Instead, they contain the justification for one of the most destructive developments of our contemporary globalization, the destruction of unique particular cultures through the dismantling of limits. As Steinbock puts it, "[l]imits themselves are ostensibly razed in an effort to create a nondominating, nonintimidating, nonhierarchical, noncompetitive, equal, interchangeable, in short a so-called non-limiting situation […] a world *sans frontières*."[148] Although the ethical intentions behind this development may be seen as something we should endorse, as a result we have also failed to appreciate the specificity of particular homeworlds and their unique traditions. As Steinbock concludes, our politically correct dictum does not allow us to no longer speak of "aliens" or "foreigners" but of "internationals", which seems to suggest that the per-

[145] Steinbock 1995: 207.
[146] Steinbock 1995: 207. As Steinbock is right to emphasize, Husserl's various analyses provide us with also different readings on the relation between home and alien. Against the crude and one-sided process of "occupation" (*Besetzung*), Husserl speaks of the possibility of "transgression" (*Überschreitung*), which would not aim at the destruction of limits, but their appropriation in mutual understanding. Unlike violence, that represents the outright denying or occluding of "limit-claims" through hierarchical domination or what Steinbock calls the "logic of dissimulation", a transgressive experience would be essentially responsive to these limits. (1995: 249).
[147] Derrida and Roudinesco 2004: 18.
[148] Steinbock 1995: 252.

spectives of home and alien have become essentially interchangeable.[149]

While I find this analysis suggestive, I believe it is necessary to reflect upon it in regard to two different perspectives – that of contemporary globalization, and that of Husserl's own generative phenomenology. While it is true that through the development of contemporary world-system, we have experienced the dissolution of several cultural or national frontiers, we are also constantly establishing new ones. To follow Marx's expression in *Grundrisse*, instead of "sacred limits" the contemporary world of capitalist market-economy knows mostly "barriers" which it seeks to overcome[150] – this is because capital, as the universal medium of human interaction, strives towards the universal development of the forces of production. In order to uphold itself, however, the universalistic tendency of capitalist market-economy cannot give up on all barriers. If the Chinese, Indian, or Vietnamese workers were provided with the same norms and standards of salary or labor-safety as in the Western world, the structural asymmetry that is the central motor of capitalist expansionism and thus, the production of surplus-value, would disappear. All in all, global market-economy does not do away with cultural differences, but it employs them in order to create different experiences of exoticism, which are then more or less successfully capitalized. What I find philosophically most interesting is that this structural asymmetry, which is sustained especially through national limits, is not merely a matter of economic inequality; it is upheld by all kinds of beliefs on the normative specificity of particular cultures. We encounter this thought in arguments according to which Islam and democracy are essentially "incompatible", or, that the promotion of women's rights in certain parts of Africa would be the violation of their uniqueness of certain traditions. In some cases, it is exactly limits that hinder the formation of a uniquely responsible stance, which would acknowledge the unquestioned value of the individual.

What these problems seem to call for is indeed a rethinking of the very idea of ethical and political universalism. While I agree with Steinbock that this idea of responsible universalism should not take its point of departure from the mere dismantling of the difference between home and alien – a world *sans frontiers* – we should also resist the contemporary tendency to

[149] Ibid.
[150] Marx 1993: 408. Cf. Introduction.

fetishize cultural limits for the sake of an irreconcilable asymmetry. That cultural traditions are unique and asymmetrical can be used as a justification for tolerance as well as inequality; limits can serve the purpose of both altruism as well as negligent *laissez-faire*. Therefore, this asymmetry – although it is the necessary starting-point of a responsive stance – should not be attested as the outcome of philosophical universalism.

Accordingly, from a philosophical-political point of view, I believe that a more responsive and responsible idea of universalism calls for at least two things. First, I believe we ought to have a broader and more dynamic view of the very process of limit-constitution, i.e., how different cultural, national, and political borders are formed, what is their relation, and whose interests do they serve. Following Husserl, we should treat limit-constitution as a fundamental characteristic of human experience; however, we should also appreciate the different underpinnings of existing limits. As we become a part of a cultural heritage, we also become a part of a shared cultural territory whose limits and borders are manifold and dynamic. Although these limits have the original intention of delineating the sphere of familiarity, not all limits retain this task. The national limits of today's world, for instance, demarcate and control rather strictly the possibilities of mobility, and not the sphere of familiarity. While I agree with philosophers such as Habermas for whom "any political community that wants to understand itself as a democracy must at least distinguish between members and non-members,"[151] there are no necessary grounds to fix oneself to a particular conception of this division (ethnic or national). We should draw no straightforward ethical or political conclusions from the existence of cultural limits – quite the contrary. As Étienne Balibar has argued, because the control of limits constitutes one of the key areas of national sovereignty, we ought to treat these limits as institutions that can be brought into democratic deliberation.[152] Political thinking, I suggest, should begin not with the mere recognition of limits but with their critique.

Second, against the contemporary understanding of political universalism, which most often takes its point of departure from the propagation of particular norms and practices – such as the Western conception of

[151] Habermas 2001: 107.
[152] Balibar 2004: 108.

human rights, democratic institutions, or capitalist economy – I believe we ought to invent new concepts and incentives that would acknowledge the multiplicity of normative frameworks, and found their universality-claims upon this acknowledgement. For this reason, I believe we ought to go beyond the traditional understanding of universalism as a *substantial* notion that is always bound to the particular norms and validities of a particular homeworld. Instead, we ought to take our point of departure from the idea of universalism as an essentially open principle, which primarily points towards a space of encounter for particular normative frameworks. Understood this way, a universalistic stance would be something which cannot delineate the "universal" in advance; rather, following Judith Butler, this approach would "underscore the very category of the 'universal' as a site of insistent contest and resignification."[153] It would treat universalism as an essentially *formal* notion, as a task rather than a doctrine. In this respect, the other would represent not the "limit" of a particular universality, but instead, otherness as such would constantly function as the necessary prerequisite of a universalistic position.

Husserl himself did entertain this idea of a reciprocal universalism at least in a couple of short essays from the mid-1920s, in which he discussed a German translation of Buddhist scriptures and compared these to Socratic ideals.[154] According to him, Buddha's texts portrayed an attitude towards the world that could be seen as "totally opposite" to ours. For anyone who has not grown into the Indian religious culture, this system of references is as such radically alien. However, transformed to philosophical descriptions of the religious-ethical life, these texts can be seen as an "unquestioned possibility" for the European culture. Through its motive of world-renouncement (*Weltentsagung*) and the demand for self-responsibility, argues Husserl, the Buddhist tradition is indeed comparable with "the highest formations of the philosophical and religious spirit of our European culture"[155] – something that can contribute to the "ethical, religious and philosophical renewal of our culture"[156].

[153] Butler 1995: 40. See also Holenstein 1998: 242.

[154] The first of these texts "Über die Reden Gotamo Buddhos" (written in 1925) is available in HuaXXVII, 125–126. The second and longer one "Sokrates–Buddha" (1926) has been edited by Sebastian Luft and published in *Husserl Studies* 26 (2010).

[155] "Nur mit den höchsten Gestaltungen des philosophischen und religiösen Geistes unserer europäischen Kultur kann der Buddhismus parallelisiert werden." HuaXXVII: 126.

[156] "[…] der an der ethischen, religiösen, philosophischen Erneuerung unserer Kultur

What Husserl seemed to be suggesting is that not only do these texts give us information about a foreign culture and its system of reference, but they disclose a novel possibility of an intellectual attitude unarticulated in our European-Occidental tradition. Against the "rationalism" of Greek philosophy, which sought for a transcendent point of reference to all reality – manifested in two formulations of absolute and self-sufficient being, Plato's ideas of Aristotle's idea of God – the Indian thought professes the transient, "irrational" character of the world of appearances. The Indian way, argues Husserl, resembles the Greek model in its urge to surmount the mundane reality of appearances; however, its approach is straightforwardly "transcendental"[157] in the sense that it holds subjectivity as the ground of all meaningfulness. The Indian religiosity represents a kind of "atheistic theology", which does not do away with the meaninglessness of existence – it sanctifies the idea of *samsāra*, the cycle of suffering and rebirth that concerns each entity – and thus it avoids all questions of teleological development. However, it is exactly by delineating the possibility of a non-theoretical transcendental philosophy, the Buddhist thinking provides the possibility of a *positive crisis* for the present-day European humanity – one that might help us to acknowledge the essentially practical foundation of theoretical attitude.

As Merleau-Ponty has put it, it was exactly this opening towards the alien that served as the guiding presupposition of Husserl's late reflections on Europe:

> Certainly nothing was more *foreign* to Husserl than a European chauvinism. For him European knowledge would maintain its value only by becoming capable of understanding what is not itself. What is new in the later writings is that to think philosophically, to be a philosopher, is no longer to leap from existence to essence, to depart from facticity in order to depart from facticity in order to join the idea. To think philosophically, to be a philosopher – in relation to the past, for example – is to understand this past through the internal link between it and us.[158]

These reflections provide us with the possibility of articulating the idea of universalism on the basis of Husserlian generativity. It is my convic-

Anteil nimmt." Ibid.

[157] Husserl, SB 16.

[158] Merleau-Ponty 1964: 89.

tion that Husserl – through his reflections on Europe, its historicity and generativity – pointed towards a radically renewed understanding of a universal culture, whose novelty can be formulated through three different features:

1. *Formal*. Instead of the substantial approach to universalism characteristic of modern interpretation of this notion, Husserl's reflections on Europe provide us with an inextricably formal characterization of the universal culture. Instead of defining itself in regard to a particular set of universal norms, values or beliefs, this idea of universalism can only be acknowledged in terms of non-substantial undertaking, i.e., as a common task.
2. *Pluralistic*. Instead taking its point of departure from the normative framework of a particular homeworld, Husserl's idea of a responsible universalism entails a necessary relation to a manifold of subjects, their unique homeworlds and traditions. The shared world as the horizon of horizons can only be discovered on the basis of this plurality.[159]
3. *Open to rearticulation*. In accordance with the infinitely open horizon of production characteristic of philosophical ideality, it is necessary that we understand the universal as fundamentally incomplete. Whatever practices, accomplishments or institutions we may promote in the name of universalism, we must always accompany this promotion with the awareness of the essentially inexhaustible horizon of possible development.

Philosophical reflection, accordingly, does not guarantee universality. However, it provides the means through which our critical attitude can become even more critical – the instrument which, by making learning and development possible, turns our adhesion to the empirical into a virtue. Thus *philosophy, for Husserl, is universal in its pretension to become universal*.

In the last chapter of this work, I bring this idea of universalism together with the most radical, and at the same time, most ambiguous characterization of Husserl's normative ideal of community: the community of love (*Liebesgemeinschaft*). It is my argument that this idea, by pointing

[159] Following Waldenfels, it is possible here to speak of "universalizations" in plural (Waldenfels 1997: 83).

towards the ethical implications of the essential intertwinedness of human subjects (Cf. Ch. 2.2), provides us with the most compelling philosophical solution to the problematic of universalism and generativity.

4.4 Rethinking Universalism on the Basis of Husserlian Phenomenology: *Liebesgemeinschaft* and Generativity

> It is true that Marx tells us that history does not walk on its head, but it is also true that it does not think with its feet. Or we should say rather that it is neither its 'head' nor its 'feet' that we have to worry about, but its 'body'. – Maurice Merleau-Ponty[160]

The concept of love holds a central position in the tradition of Western philosophy, not merely as a systematic topic, but as a general methodological notion. In *Symposion*, Socrates claimed that the only thing he knew something about was "the art of love (*ta erōtika*)"[161], which was supposed to elevate him to the domain of eternal ideas – in *Cratylus*, Plato even entertained the idea that love (*erōs*) and "questioning" (*erotan*) are of the same origin.[162] According to Aristotle, no community could exist without the motive of *philia*, friendship or social sympathy, so that even philosophical community flourished because of the affective bond between its members.[163] For modern philosophy, love is no stranger either. Especially with Fichte and Hegel, there begins a tradition which emphasizes love as a necessary constituent of one's personal identity and freedom, a relation which both vivifies the life of the individual self as well as preserves and cherishes the individuality of the fellow human being.[164] This tradition, which treats love as a solution to the conflict of individual wills was later picked up by Max Scheler, Jean-Paul Sartre, and many others.[165]

[160] Merleau-Ponty 1962: xix.
[161] *Symp*. 177d.
[162] *Cratylus*, 398c-e.
[163] Pol. IV.11 1295b24ff.
[164] "[…] das Leben ist Liebe, und die ganze Form und Kraft des Lebens besteht in der Liebe und entsteht aus der Liebe". Fichte 2001: 11.
[165] In the succeeding tradition of Continental philosophy, the philosophical underpinnings

For Husserl's phenomenology as well, the concept of love played an important role both as a personal as well as social phenomenon. Although several scholars have discussed to the concept of love (*Liebe*) in Husserl's ethical writings, there seems to be very little consensus on its role in the overall project of phenomenology, nor the motivations behind its usage. Ullrich Melle has paid attention to the fact that whereas the published works of Husserl are mostly focused on a "rational-based" approach to ethical questions – the questions of values, their evidence, and the general structures of practical reason – discussions of love are mainly found in the manuscripts.[166] According to Melle's interpretation, this should not prevent us from ascribing love an important practical role in Husserl's ethics: instead, these reflections reveal the essential limitations of the early axiological-rational approach to ethics, which Husserl came to consider "too formal, too universalist, too objectivist, and too calculating."[167] The problematic of love came to complement the cases in which the strictly rational model of ethical deliberation (such as the "law of absorption") seemed to prove inadequate, or, where the mere sense of duty failed to explain the motives of ethical behavior. This concerned especially our relation to other persons, whose value, Husserl argued, cannot be ultimately decided apart from the affective bonds that we develop towards them – an insight that entailed a clear separation from the Kantian idea of formal imperative as the foundation of ethics.

For this reason, several commentators have connected Husserl's discourse on love to his theory of empathy. James Mensch, for one, treats love as a higher form of empathy, which not only recognizes the otherness of the fellow human being, but affirms it as something that calls for cultivation: "his life, his existence, as if were mine".[168] Peter Hadreas, in his turn, discusses Husserl's idea of personal love as a dynamic notion, which has its experiential foundation in the primordial (pre-emphatic) "contact" with the other. According to his detailed account, love must be understood in connection with Husserl's complex notion of *Nachverstehen*, "emphatic understanding" – or, as Hadreas translates it, "understanding-

of love have been of interest to many prominent scholars, including Luce Irigaray, Michele Le Doeuff, and Jean-Luc Nancy.

166 Melle 2002: 247.

167 Melle 2007: 12.

168 Mensch 1988: 383–384.

following-after-another" – which acknowledges the non-objective and singular character of the other.[169] The uniqueness of the other that one experiences in love cannot be predelineated in terms of objective categories, but rather, the beloved other transcends all "objective" attributes. This is also what Max Scheler meant when arguing that love expresses a specific relation to the other in his or her *individuality*.[170]

It should be noted, however, that the applications of love in Husserl's body of work are manifold. At times, Husserl seems to talk about it in a somewhat "Platonic" sense of *philosophia* as love of knowledge or wisdom, for instance, as a "love of ideas" (*Ideenliebe*) or "pure love for objective knowledge" (*reinen Liebe zur sachlichen Erkenntnis*).[171] At other occasions, as Hiroshi Goto has pointed out, love resembles a kind of Aristotelian virtue, which is able to foster the sense of belonging-together of a community.[172] In several occasions, Husserl resorts to the Kantian notion of "the love of neighbor" (*Nächstenliebe*), which refers to the idea of love as an active-practical notion in distinction from the mere "pathological" (i.e. emotional) love. According to this idea, love does not merely exist between individual subjects, but it announces itself an essential imperative of practical reason, as something that we ought to exercise in relation to our fellow human beings. In Husserl's lectures on Fichte, love plays a crucial role in explaining the teleological structure of human comportment, i.e., the will to become the best possible human being. According to this account, self-love is the condition for all genuine forms of human comportment, including the love for the other. Lastly, love is discussed in connection to the Hegelian relation between Master and Slave, as the overcoming of all relations of power and domination.[173]

One of the most lucid definitions of love as an ethical notion was provided by Husserl in his 1920/24 lecture course on ethics. Here, the concept of *Liebe* (and especially *Nächstenliebe*) was introduced as the guid-

[169] Hadreas 2007: 17–22.
[170] Cf. Scheler 1973: 163. These insights go well hand in hand with Husserl's insistence that the other given in empathy is not a mere analogue of me, but rather, as essentially other. See for instance, HuaI: 153; HuaIV: 375.
[171] On *eros* and *Liebe*, see HuaXXVII: 84, 101.
[172] Hiroshi Goto has emphasized the influence of the Aristotelian *filia* ("love" or "friendship") and its teleological connotations for Husserl's account of love, which he reads as an explicitly interpersonal relation (Goto 2004: 275).
[173] HuaXV: 406n1

ing motive of a special domain of ethics, the domain of "moral philosophy" (*Moralphilosophie*). Whereas Husserl conceived "ethics" as dealing with the general, a priori structures of practical acts (*Tätigkeiten*) and goals (*Zwecke*), the domain of moral philosophy was primarily confined to the "material" dimension of practical acts, most importantly, the relations between individual subjects.[174] Already in his earlier lecture courses Husserl's had emphasized that while formal axiology could be conceived to be the one of the most fundamental parts of an *a priori* account of ethics, the mere structural analysis of value could not explain why we consider certain goals or possibilities of action as absolutely binding. Accordingly, without this "material a priori" there would be "no types and families of objects that carried a priori predicates of values", and "there would be no support for the idea of an objectively pre-established preferability and for the idea of a best."[175] In other words, the distinction between material and formal axiology was needed in order to overcome the historical opposition between moral emotivism (*Gefühlsmoral*) and rationalism (*Verstandesmoral*): ethical consideration, although it acquires for itself the form of rational deliberation, has its ultimate foundation in the affective bonds between human subjects.[176]

The idea that the concept of love is important in regard to Husserl's *social ethics* gains some evidence on the basis of this analysis. As Melle and Henning Peucker point out, this transition from axiology to moral philosophy should also be read as a shift from a individual-oriented approach to a more dynamic and social view of ethics.[177] An ethical life cannot be assessed merely in terms of the capability of the individual to live a rationally justifiable life in terms of subjective insights, but we must also take into account the relational character of human existence as such. The others are not just there in my field of action as simply other agents, but as someone who present me with a duty or an invitation to take a responsive

[174] HuaXXXVII: 10ff. See also HuaXXVIII: 414.
[175] HuaXXVIII: 139. See Melle 2002: 236.
[176] However, whereas the earlier reflections were still bound to the absolute demand of value-objectivity, which overcomes the mere emotional bond, the later analyses of love pointed towards another kind of understanding of ethical obligation. As Moritz Geiger noted to Husserl, it would be indeed strange to demand a mother to justify her love for the child in terms of objective good – instead, the value of the child is lived affectively and straightforwardly in the act of personal love. Melle 2002: 238–244.
[177] See Peucker's introduction in HuaXXXVII: xxi. Cf. Melle 2002: 239.

stance towards them. This responsiveness characterizes the earliest relations of our individual life (e.g. a child's relation to parent), but it does not restrict itself to these. Love extends from the deepest motivations of our intentional life to the highest goals of our communal existence, giving the fundamental sense to the overarching teleology of humanity as such. "In a genuine sense," as Husserl put it, "love is one of the main problems of phenomenology, though not in its abstract unity of singularity, but as a universal problem."[178] Love is not a mere relation that prevails between two individual subjects; it is the vivifying force of ethical humanity on its way to a more genuine and responsible form of existence.

In this last chapter, I will interpret Husserl's discourse on the "community of love" (*Liebesgemeinschaft*) as an answer to the problem of the teleological ideal of humanity, and consequently, to the problem of ethical universalism. I argue that it was through this idea that Husserl formulated the most interesting and compelling solution to the problem of the normative ideal of community, especially in regard to the generative problem of axiological asymmetry.[179] Instead of satisfying itself in the generative asymmetry characteristic of the development of individual traditions, love, I argue, pointed towards a more dynamic interpretation of this asymmetry – one, which would have corresponded with the inextricably open horizon of philosophical reason.

As far as I know, no commentator has interpreted Husserl's idea of love in connection to the problem of universalism. This is perhaps no surprise considering the somewhat personalistic tenor of this notion – love seems too intimate – or the fact that in Husserl's later texts on Europe the discourse of love is almost completely absent. This should not prevent us from treating it as an alternative discourse to the "theoretical expansion-

[178] "Die Liebe im echten Sinne ist eines der Hauptprobleme der Phänomenologie, und das nicht in der abstrakten Einzelheit uns Vereinzelung, sondern als universales Problem" Ms. E III 2/36b. Quoted in Schuhmann 1988: 78.

[179] What many scholars fail to notice, however, is that the most probable source of Husserl's notion of the "community of love" was Max Scheler. Although Husserl never really explicitly verifies this connection, it seems evident that the significant influence that Scheler had on Husserl's personalist ethics, extended also to the concept of love and its respective communal form. The notion of *Liebesgemeinschaft* appeared already in Scheler's *Formalismus in der Ethik*, and it was treated as one of the "pure" forms of community alongside the, "community of law" (*Rechtsgemeinschaft*), cultural community (*Kulturgemeinschaft*) as well as the "community of life" (*Lebensgemeinschaft*) and its parallel institutional form, the state (Scheler 1980: 126). Scheler linked the idea of *Liebesgemeinschaft* to a particular form of human community, the church, and separated it clearly from state and culture.

ism" of the philosophical community – a discourse which took its point of departure from the unlimited sharedness and repeatability of theoretical truths. It is my conviction that the notion of love provides us with the ultimate philosophical foundation for the realization of a genuinely *reciprocal universalism*, that is, a universalism founded on the essential multiformity of human reality.

There are, of course, good reasons to consider the community of love as an unrealistic, deficient, and even naive solution to the political problems of globalized world. In times of huge structural imbalances of the global world-system – the one-sided exploitation of natural resources, the growing gap between rich and poor – the idea that we ought to "love each other" may appear as negligent or simply arrogant. As Janet Donohoe has put it, Husserl's *Liebesgemeinschaft* does seem "idealistic sounding"[180]. By no means am I suggesting love in a personalistic (or "romantic") sense as an answer to these problems. However, I believe that this idealism expresses something crucial in regard to the ethical and political dimension of phenomenology and philosophy in general. Philosophy, for Husserl, was essentially an "idealistic" undertaking in the sense that it aims at creating ideals through which the concrete affairs of this world can be assessed and transformed. Ideals are both the ultimate goals through which our life gains itself a teleological structure, but they also function as critical devices through which the particularities and contingencies of the existing social and political reality can be brought into light. Ideals are indispensable *not in spite of* but exactly *because they are unattainable*.

As I already pointed out, Husserl distanced himself from the political philosophy of modernity, which sought the *telos* of communal life in a particular societal model or political institution.[181] This is also confirmed by John Drummond, who claims that "Husserl, unlike, say Aristotle or Hegel, does not believe that the community qua political is the *telos* or fulfillment

[180] Donohoe 2004: 144.

[181] Here, my reading differs from that of Natalie Depraz who argues for the essential connection between the social and political aspects of phenomenology: "A political phenomenology is not then a phenomenology *of a* regional object described *as political,* but an *originally* political because an originally *communal* one" (Depraz 1995: 7). As I see it, Husserl's understanding of the political referred to the institutionalized forms of human communality (i.e. permanent framework of generativity in the divisions between home and alien), and as such, it was to be distinguished from the fundamental intertwining of human intersubjectivity.

of all social groupings [...] he reserves that privilege for the authentic moral community, the 'community of love' as he sometimes calls it."[182] Although I agree with Drummond's analysis on the essential inadequacy of the political community, I believe that the distinction between the authentic moral community (community of love) and the political community should not be conceived as a distinction between two alternative goals – as if humanity could set itself on the path of love instead of nation-states. Instead, the "moral" and the "political" ought to be understood in terms of two discourses – the absolute and relative – which are both necessary for the realization of the ethical dimension of philosophy.[183]

Husserl's philosophy, as I argued, presents us with a form of utopian thinking which calls for the best possible on the basis of a particular historical situation, but which must also situate itself with regard to an infinite horizon of development. In order to do so, however, it must conceive the absolute ideal as essentially ineffable, as something which cannot be predelineated in its totality – the concrete utopia must be dynamic, not static. We should read the "community of love" as the delineation of this infinite horizon of human development, which presents us with an imperative to take a critical relation to the existing structures and institutions of the political reality.

In search for the antecedents of Husserl's idea of a universal community, I suggest that we ought to surpass the framework of Greek political philosophy, and turn towards a specific intellectual framework ascending from it, namely, the *Christian*. What interests us in this connection is the philosophical and conceptual shift of position that the Christian experience represents in regard to the political philosophy of the Greeks. It was exactly the Christian experience, I argue, that was the first to elucidate the concrete discrepancy that prevails between the absolute ideal of humanity and its empirical counterpart, the political community. Unlike for Greek political thought, for Christian experience this relation between the ideal and the concrete was to be understood not in terms of implementation but in terms of a concrete struggle, which acquires for itself the form of an infinite horizon of future development. This entails that the ethical ideal

[182] Drummond 2000: 41–42.

[183] As I argued in the previous sections of this part, the Husserlian idea of political philosophy should be seen in the light of his general idea of historical teleology, which unfolds through the dynamic of absolute and relative ideals.

cannot be realized by merely shaping the political reality according to it, but rather, it must be introduced through radically different concepts than the political reality. As Husserl put it in a manuscript, we find this renewing potential in the figures of Jesus and St. Paul:

> Of Christ I have the archetypical idea of a divine man, of Paul the idea of the noblest and godly evangelist, a man that struggles and broods in this struggle. [Paul is] a seeker, striving to bring himself and others believing in Christ to clarity and pure life, to find the corresponding norms in their concrete daily activities.[184]

What we find in the figure of Paul is the motive of perpetual *renewal* that was still lacking from political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. This renewal must be targeted towards the existing societal and political reality with their norms and institutions, but it must be prefaced within the individual itself. This means that a genuinely universalistic stance cannot be introduced solely through institutional reforms, but it must be corresponded with the idea of human development, which takes a critical relation to the acquired personality or identity.

Correspondingly, in search of the right approach to Husserl's community of love, I believe we ought to turn neither to the Platonic *erōs* nor the Aristotelian *filia*, but instead, the Christian *agapē* expressed especially in the Gospels and the letters of St. Paul. I believe it was only the Christian experience that was able to express the essential discrepancy that prevails between the interpersonal and cultural/objective structures of universalism – the substantial and formal definitions of universalism – that was articulated by Paul in his strict separation of the idea of law (*nomos*) from that of love. Moreover, whereas for Plato and Aristotle love was supposed to nurture the belonging-together of a communion of philosophers or a circle of friends, the Christian notion of *agapē* presented a demand to transcend all traditionally given boundaries of the familiar and the strange, of home and alien, friend and enemy. We find this exhortation already in the classic exhortation to "love your enemies […] do good to those hating you"[185], but it was especially through Paul that this principle was

[184] "Von Christus habe ich eine urbildliche Idee eines „Gott-Menschen", von Paulus die Idee eines edelsten gotterfüllten Predigers und eines ringenden und im Ringen grübelnden Menschen, eines Suchers, strebend sich und anderen Christus Gläubigen zur Klarheit und zum reinen Leben zu helfen, in seinen konkreten Tagesforderungen die entsprechenden Normen zu finden usw." HuaXXVII: 101.

[185] Matt. 5:44.

understood in terms of an existential conversion, or, to put it in Husserlian terms, as a change of attitude. What Paul understood was that the genuinely universalistic position does not necessitate merely a changed relation to other people but it entails a critical relation to those particular identities that confine us to a certain position. A just ethical attitude – an attitude which is also universal through and through – cannot be introduced solely through institutional reforms (e.g. universal human rights) but it must be grounded in the transformation of the human individual. As Husserl argued:

> The Christian love is first of all unavoidably pure love. But it is connected with the quest (which is necessarily motivated by love), to become the biggest possible community of love. Thus, [it is] a striving to "set" the people in relation with one another, to open up to them, and to open up for themselves.[186]

This transition, however, should also be assessed in its "political" conclusions. By evoking the idea of universal community founded on love, Paul transferred the question of the normative ideal of community from the categories of righteous governance (*politeia*) and law (*nomos*) to interpersonal relations. This transformation, I argue, was also reflected in the fundamentally apolitical interest of Husserl's own position. What Paul delineated was an idea of communal existence that would have not been based on the exclusion of the other (i.e. the strange), but instead, on the perpetual relativization of the home/alien distinction. This does not entail that we ought to give up on our political institutions and laws; instead, it presents us with a political discourse as something that ought to be assessed in the light of moral discourse.

My argument is based on three different points:

1. For Husserl as for Christian experience (Paul), love expresses the explicitly apolitical character of the absolute ideal of humankind. This ideal is not implemented merely through institutional transformations, but it must be founded on the idea of human development.

[186] "Die Christliche Liebe ist zunächst notgedrungen bloss Liebe. Aber sie ist verbunden mit dem Streben (das notwendig von der Liebe her motiviert ist), in möglichst grossem Umfange zur Liebesgemeinschaft zu werden. Also Streben, zu den Menschen in „Beziehung zu treten", sich ihnen zu eröffnen und sie für sich zu erschliessen etc." HuaXIV: 175.

2. Love, for both, is about discovering the essential *relationality* of human existence. It is defined by a critical stance towards the generative-political antithesis of home and alien; however, it aims at locating this tension at the heart of subjectivity.
3. Ultimately, love is the intersubjective equivalent of the philosophical horizon of infinite teleology.

In the third part of the work, we already touched upon the question of the universal aspects of Christian faith, particularly, the question of Catholicism. Already at its very early stages, Catholicism was associated with the notion of *orthodoxos* – orthodoxy, or literally "true opinion" – that distinguished itself from what was called the "bad faith" of *hereticism*: most importantly, from the teachings of Arius (256–336 AD), a Christian Presbyterian who argued against the dominant Trinitarian dogma and emphasized the ontological distinction between God and Christ, but also several Gnostic groups that relied on different written sources than the Council. Even though Augustine argued that Catholicism was able to provide what he called the *via universalis* (universal road) to eternal life, his work on the universal community of Christians was titled as *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*, i.e., the City of God *against the pagans*.[187] Thus on the one hand, Catholicism stood for the unification of Christian congregations under single ecclesiastical and political jurisdiction; on the other, it was used to separate the official, orthodox doctrine from that of the heretics. For the Church, Christian universalism had become a political strategy, and correspondingly, *a medium of exclusion*.

However, there are good reasons to claim that the Catholic doctrine lost a crucial aspect of the Early Christian universalism, which took its point of departure from the idea of evangelization. Perhaps the most famous passage that is mentioned in connection to Christian universalism is the one delivered us by Matthew: "Go you therefore, *and teach all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"[188]. This exhortation – known to us as the Great Commission – was originally given only to the Eleven Apostles, although the later commentators have been willing to interpret it as an imperative for the whole Christian community. Although this passage and its modifications (Mark

[187] Augustine, *De civ.*
[188] Matt. 28:19–20.

16:14–18, Luke 24:44–49, Acts 1:4–8, and John 20:19–23) are often presented in a negative light – especially in connection to the later Crusades – the text includes no reference to the use of power or violence as a means of conversion. For the basic framework of the early evangelization was that of "righteous" (Gr. *eu*) "message delivery" (Gr. *aggeleō*): *persuasion*, not coercion.[189] This message delivery was not confined to a particular ethnic, national, or cultural people; instead, it took its point of departure from the transient character of individual identities. At least according to Matthew's description, the primary framework of "conversion" (*strefō*) is that of becoming a child ("Who shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven"[190]); not merely in the sense of returning to moral innocence, but in the sense of revoking the culturally inherited conceptions, values and validities.

This evidently apolitical undertone is present in the earliest documents of the New Testament, the letters of St. Paul. Paul understood his basic task as the proclamation of the "God's secret wisdom", that of universal salvation (*sōteria*) through faith (*pistis*) – a secret which had been revealed to the world through the death of Christ. This secret, however, could not be expressed in terms of "wisdom of this world or of the rulers of this world"[191]; instead, from the viewpoint of governing authorities this revelation appeared as an "affront" (*skandalon*) or "foolishness" (*mōria*).[192] Why is this? Against the Greek "wisdom" (*sofia*) which searched for the ultimate grounds of the appearing reality as well as the Judean quest for "signs" (*sēmeion*) of miracle, the Christian revelation could not be comprehended through "words" (*logoi*) or "sight" (*blepō*). The forthcoming kingdom of God could only be apprehended in terms of "power" (*dynamis*), as

[189] And of course, the early Christian universalism – like Greek politics – celebrated the idea of *rebirth* as one of its basic tenets. As Charles Freeman has pointed out, especially "Matthew […] presents Jesus as spearheading a *Jewish* renewal, even if it is one that has not been recognized by his own people" – a point that is supported by the recurring use of "rabbi" as a description for Jesus in the Gospels. The exhortation of Jesus in Mark 1:15 "thinking after", *metanoein* – what, for instance, the King James translation calls "repentance" – should be read in the context of Hellenic Greek, in which it meant most often a "changing one's way of life" or "adoption of another view", or simply: *renewal*. See Freeman 2002: 91; Rossbach 1999: 39. See also Ef. 4:23 in which Paul uses the corresponding exhortation for renewal, *ananeō*.

[190] Matt. 18:4.

[191] 1. Cor. 2:6

[192] 1. Cor 1:18.

a transition that effectuates itself by the means of "spirit" (*pneuma*) – "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."[193] This did not prevent Paul from arguing that "every person must be subject to the governing authorities"[194] – despite the revelation, the political institutions were to be left basically intact. Paul did not understand himself as a political revolutionary or a competitor of the Roman emperor; instead, the revolution promoted by Christianity was to be realized on a wholly another level.

Despite the seemingly apolitical undertone, in the recent decades there has been several scholarly works that read Paul as an explicitly political thinker. Beginning with Jacob Taubes' *The Political Theology of St. Paul* (*Die politische Theologie des Paulus*, based on his 1987 seminars, published in 1993), philosophers such as Giorgio Agamben, Alan Badiou, and Slavoj Žižek have discussed the works of Paul from a social and political perspective. According to Taubes' thesis, the Pauline revolution did not point towards an otherworldly paradise, but as already Feuerbach had maintained, to the establishment of "the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth." For this reason, argues Taubes, we ought to read Paul's work in relation to two competing frameworks of political thinking: the *imperium* of Rome and the ethnic unity of the Jewish people.[195] Indeed, Paul's insistence to avoid the traditional notions of *polis*, *ethnos* and *imperium* as well as his fierce critique of the Jewish law (*nomos*) can be read against this background. What Taubes does not emphasize, however, is that the categories of *polis* and *nomos* constituted the basic framework of Greek political philosophy, and that Paul's decision to resort to the notion of "congregation" (*ecclēsia*) as the model for the universal community might as well be read *against*, and *not in favor of* Hellenistic *cosmopolitanism* (Ch. 3.4). Although Paul retained also the traditional sense of *ecclēsia* in the sense of particular congregations, he also employed this notion in a transferred sense to describe the universal community of Christians: "He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things for the congregation, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."[196]

[193] Gal. 5:22.
[194] Rom. 13:1.
[195] Taubes 2004: 117.
[196] Ef. 1:22-23.

Let us first focus on the concept of law (*nomos*). As I argued in the previous part of the work, this notion functioned as one of the central categories of the Greek political thinking, which referred to the "constructed" character of the political order. Although the scope of this concept included also the typical sense of "legislation" that protects individual human beings from the despotism of others, the concept of *nomos* was also understood in a broader context, as a pre-political category which constitutes the domain of societal and political order before any concrete legislation. Law (*nomos*) is what "delimits" (*nemein*) the political space by identifying the political subject (for instance, the "free, rational Athenian male"), and by excluding those who do not fit the criteria (foreigners, women, slaves etc.). Plato discovered his own view of political sovereignty through the best possible realization of this norm – the philosophers – which then set the standard for the remaining classes of society. Governance, *politeia*, was then required to keep these classes in their proper position; at the end, politics is about maintaining the societal order.

Paul's critique of the idea of governance, which stood at the center of Greco-Roman system of government, is highlighted by the fact that the notion of *politeia* appears in his letters only once.[197] His ferocious attack against the category of law was motivated, first of all, by the promise of universal salvation, which could not be attained through "works" (*ergon*), but only faith: "No human being will be justified in God's sight by means of the works prescribed by the law"[198]. However, Paul did not criticize merely the idea of salvation through human activity, but the very idea of delimitation as the fundamental premise of political communities. Law does not merely divide the field of human action into forbidden and permissible deeds; law creates the "communal" or "political" subject *per se*. By ascribing to the normative framework of a particular community, I become a member of that community, but I also acquire for myself a conception of my "homecomrades". To put it in Husserlian terms, "law" is the basic principle of generativity, which prescribes the normative foundation of a particular community. In this regard, the relation that I have to the other through law is either pardoning or adjudging; I am compelled to accept or refuse the other. Through law I encounter the fellow human

[197] Ef. 2:12.
[198] Rom. 3:20, cf. 9:32.

being as either predictable or mystified, as something that I can or cannot govern.[199]

In order to account for the idea of human existence as being torn between the universal and the particular aspects, Paul invoked a distinction between the "inner" (*esō*) and "outer" (*exō*) human being.[200] As I become a part of a certain tradition with its specific normative framework, I develop myself an abiding personal form or tendency, which defines my directedness towards the world. In Husserl's terms, these tendencies become a part of my *habituated personality*, which most often justifies itself on the basis of convention or affective allure. This is what Paul means by "outer man": I begin to act as it is appropriate for certain identity position; I begin to want what is appropriate for my homeworld.

Thus, the imminent consequence of the "end (*telos*) of the law"[201] that had been introduced to the world through Christ was the concrete exhortation to do away with the generative distances that separate human beings from each other. Therefore, as Paul claimed, "there is no difference between Jew and Greek"[202] – a genuinely universalistic stance must understand itself in a critical relation to the very category of identity as such. Instead of a universal community which founds itself on law – on delimitation and exclusion – a genuinely universalistic community must radically rethink this fundamental premise of all political communities.

This does not mean, however, that we could simply deny the immense generative distances that prevail between different homeworlds. We cannot simply do away with all the "habituated" characteristics of our personal life; however, we can change our attitude towards them. This is, I argue, what Paul means when he says that through Christ, "we have been

[199] As Jacob Taubes and Alain Badiou have shown in their readings of St. Paul, this is exactly how his critique of the category of law (*nomos*) ought to be understood – not as a critique of legislative praxis as such, but as the critique of the principle of separation, which "divides" (*nemein*) the domain of communal existence into particular identities, what Badiou calls "subjective dispositions" (Badiou 2003: 47). It is exactly through the category of law that I encounter the other as a representative of a particular normative framework, a particular "homeworld" – as Greek or barbarian, as Roman or Jew.

[200] See, for instance, 2. Cor. 4:16; Ef. 3:16. This outer man, Paul argues, has its antithesis in the "inner" man – a concept whose meaning Paul leaves somewhat ambiguous. While it might be the case that Paul had in mind the Platonic idea of "the man within", which appears only once in the *Republic* as a metaphor for the rational part of the soul, it seems clear that Paul conceived this idea as an essentially fluctuating concept.

[201] Rom. 10:4.

[202] Rom. 12:10.

discharged from the law"[203]. This exemption, of which Paul employs the verb *kataergō*, does not mean simple extermination of the law. As Giorgio Agamben has shown in detail, this verb ought to be understood in terms of the inactivation of law, its rendering inoperative.[204] Since my existence, for instance, is completely defined by norms, beliefs and valuations that are characteristic of a European living in the 21st century, I cannot simply do away with this "identity". However, I can resist the tendency of taking this particular normative framework as the absolute point of departure for my ethical stance.

Is this not exactly what Husserl means by "bracketing"? As Husserl emphasized on several occasions, the phenomenological *epoché* which abstains from the existence-claims of the natural attitude, does not "destroy" the world (or the generative history it contains), but rather, it sets its validity aside. As I argued previously in this work, this was exactly the stance of philosophy in regard to myth: philosophy did not "destroy" the common narratives, but it employed them in order to show their common origin in the shared lifeworld. What Paul simply did was that he radicalized this motive by taking it into the very heart of human subjectivity as such. For him, the problem was not simply in the ludicrous beliefs of our ancestors or those of other people, but in the essential tendency of human subjectivity to find contentment in a factitious personality. Therefore, a genuinely universalistic stance must incorporate within itself a motive of self-critique.

It is exactly here that we discover the topic of *renewal*. "If indeed our outward man is being decayed," writes Paul, "yet the inward man is being renewed day by day."[205] What Paul understood was that since my adherence to a particular normative framework (a law or custom) has the tendency of becoming a habitual character of my personal existence, we must constantly struggle against this tendency: "Be not conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."[206] This renewal (*anakainōsis* or *ananeōsis*), which literally refers to a transformation into a new and not a previously experienced state, finds its completion in what Paul calls "weakness" (*astheneia*). This should not be understood primar-

[203] Rom. 7:6.
[204] Agamben 2005b: 94ff.
[205] 2. Cor. 4:16.
[206] Rom. 12:2

ily in a negative sense. Weakness means, first and foremost, a situation in which I cannot present myself as the representative of a particular identity – ethnic, cultural, or national – or, when my actions are not guaranteed with their justification on the basis of a pre-established normative framework or a tradition. This weakness, however, is what makes us ultimately "strong"[207]. When I cannot justify my beliefs, actions or valuations on the basis of an established convention – a generative history – I look for the grounds of this justification elsewhere: in myself and my relations towards my fellow human beings. And it is exactly in this weakness, Paul claims, that God's "power reaches its perfection" (*dynamis en asthēneia teleitai*).[208]

It was perhaps this passage that Nietzsche had in mind as, in *The Anti-Christ*, he described Christianity as the "religion of pity", which promotes "active sympathy for the ill-constituted and weak".[209] For Nietzsche, Christianity followed the negative attitude of Greek philosophy towards life by promoting an "ideal out of opposition to the preservative instincts of strong life"[210], that is, to hunger, sexuality, quest for power, and so on. Paul did not deny the existence of these instincts, quite the contrary. What he saw was that even our most fundamental instincts and drives are never sustained merely by themselves; rather, they emerge against a set of prohibitions that are embodied by the law. Unlike Plato, who understood *nomos* as something which simply restricts the unwanted desires[211], for Paul these desires are exactly "aroused by the law" (*ta dia tou nomou energeitō*).[212] This is the idea of "forbidden fruit", or what Badiou calls the theory of subjective unconscious[213] – I always want that which I do not have, that which is possessed by others.[214]

Nevertheless, if we render inoperative the law or "shared tradition" which constitutes our common heritage (our sense of being home), what

[207] 2. Cor. 12:10
[208] 2. Cor. 12:9.
[209] "Das Mitleiden der That mit allen Missrathnen und Schwachen – das Christenthum." KSA 6.170.
[210] "Das Christenthum hat die Partei alles Schwachen, Niedrigen, Missrathnen genommen, es hat ein Ideal aus dem Widerspruch gegen die Erhaltungs-Instinkte des starken Lebens gemacht […]" KSA 6.171.
[211] Plato, *Rep.* 571b
[212] Rom. 7:5.
[213] Badiou 2003: 81.
[214] As Foucault puts it the *History of Sexuality*: "Thus one should not think that desire is repressed, for the simple reason that the law is what constitutes both desire and the lack on which it is predicated." (Foucault 1979: 81).

can bind us together? According to Paul, the answer was to be found in the concept love (*agapē*). According to him, faith operates itself through love, *which comes to replace law as the binding element of communal life*: "Do not continue to owe anything, except to love one another. For the one loving the other has consummated (*peplērōken*) the law." (Rom. 12:8) But what is "love"? We should not be absorbed too deeply in the interpretational problems that distinguish the notion of *agapē* from the related notions of *erōs* and *filia*. Let us note, however, that most of the instances of this notion in the New Testament refer to either God's love towards mankind, or, to mankind's love towards God, i.e., to the asymmetrical relation between the finite being and the infinite being. It is thus perhaps understandable that when Paul employs the notion of love to describe the reciprocal and non-hierarchical relation between individual human beings, he most often defines the "object" of love in terms of an indefinite "other" (*allēlous*), or, what later became the central notion of the Gospels, the "neighbor" (*plēsion*): "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Gal. 5:14). Although the word "neighbor" might evoke the impression of an acquaintance or someone living close to you, this is not its meaning in the context of the Christian discourse on love. The concept refers to the other exactly as removed of all his or her particular characteristics, any other person irrespective of nation or religion with whom we live or whom we chance to meet.[215] To put it in Husserlian terms, the neighbor is the other subject as *regardless of her generative background*. A genuinely ethical relation to the other becomes understandable only through a constant opening up towards the alien, a transgression of home.

Thus, what we have in this transition from "law" to "love" is a shift in the *raison d'être* of communal life itself. The ideal form of communal life can no longer be described in terms of best possible institutions but in terms of best possible interpersonal relations. Love does not undo the existing political institutions but brackets them or renders them inoperative: it sets a new standard according to which these institutions can be assessed. The Pauline "community of love" does not replace *polis* or the *imperium*; it points towards a wholly new way of comprehending the legitimacy of political and societal institutions. In other words, rather than offering a new idea that would fit the schemata and structure of Greco-Roman political

[215] See e.g. Matt. 5:43ff.

thought it questions these structures and visions a completely new idea of the foundations of human sociality.

This novel idea of an apolitical community was delineated by Paul in his attempts to provide the image of body politic with a new sense. Whereas Plato had still used the metaphor of body politic in an essentially "functional" sense – in order to validate the division between the different classes of society, the division between the ruler and the ruled – Paul employed this metaphor to argue for the essential interdependence as well as uniqueness of the individual members of community. Through the common "body of Christ", Paul was able provide a view of community which replaces the matrix of identity differences with the essential intertwinedness of individual subjects. "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another (*kath'eis allēlōn melē*),"[216] Paul writes in the letter to Romans –

> For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member (*melos*), but many. [...] If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now they are many members, but one body. The eye can't tell the hand, "I have no need for you," or again the head to the feet, "I have no need for you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.[217]

Paul presents us with a reservation: "those members which seem to be weaker..." In his time as today, we are familiar with people who do not find their place in the common life, people who are persecuted, disregarded, ostracized or bullied either because they actively refuse all commonly accepted "identities" (e.g. ways of life), or, because they unintentionally fall outside the normative framework of the majority. From the perspective of "normality", these people are indeed "seemingly weaker". At the same time, however, these marginalized groups remind the rest of the inherent conventionality of a given set of norms – of their tendency to become absolutized so that the community merely lives on its adherence to a particular norm. As we may learn from the example of National

[216] Rom. 12:5.
[217] 1. Cor. 12:12-22.

Socialism, even totalitarian ideologies do not do away with differences as such ("If they were all one member, where would the body be?" Paul asks), quite the contrary. Fascism was not, as it is sometimes claimed, the denial of differences (ethnic, cultural, sexual); instead, it elevated these differences in order to substantiate what was considered to be the norm.

Two things are important here. First, what Paul avoids with his idea of "organic unity" is the apparent misconception according to which the universal could be discovered or established simply after the negation of all differences. As Badiou puts it, for Paul differences are a fact: "One can even maintain that there is nothing else."[218] Instead of a clear-cut separation between the "empirical" identities and the underlying substance of "universal" rationality, Paul wanted to understand the universal beginning with those norms and identities that exist within this world: as a process which seeks to relativize, not destroy, the seeming differences between people. The genuine subject of universalism is not the (imagined) totality of subjects, but a *particular subject which takes a reflective stance towards its particular historical, cultural and societal situation*. Second, what this entails is that from the viewpoint of love, the solution is not to overcome differences but to promote the idea of self-responsibility in the others: "Let each one of us please his neighbor with a view to what is good, to edification".[219] Love means, above all, the sense of *being at home with oneself*.

These insights give us resources for a new constructive interpretation of Husserl's social ethics and its universalistic ideal, the community of love. As I argued in the second part of the work, the organic metaphors of bodies, organs, and tissues were a central part of Husserl's social ontology, which relied on the idea of a specific "intertwining" at the heart of human subjectivity. We discover the dependency on other streams of consciousness already at the very fundamental levels of our existence – an intertwining which makes possible the constitution of a common world. It was exactly this intertwining that Husserl wanted to articulate also in its ethical consequences. As Husserl put it in his lectures on ethics, as we think of the human individual within the community, we discover a "wonderful intertwining" (*wunderbare Verflehtung*), which binds all of the

[218] Badiou 2003: 98.
[219] Rom. 15:2

self-determinations of the individual human beings together.[220] This is, yet again, another example of Husserl's "anti-liberalistic" and "anti-atomic" view of human being: I cannot assess the ethical character of my life apart from the life of the others, but my life must also be measured by my capability to make others free and responsible. I must understand my actions as a part of a chain of actions (of others), which permeates my life and gives it a more concrete form:

> We do not live merely next to each other, but in one another. We define ourselves from person to person, from I to I, and our wills do not merely work on others as the components of our surrounding but in the others: our wills extend themselves to the will of the other, into the will of the other which is at the same time ours, so that the actions of the other can become ours, even if in a modified manner.[221]

For Husserl, this "living common" has its basis in the experience of love. Not only does love entail an intimate affection to the other but it builds up the basic experience through which life acquires a value for itself. "There is no life without love", as Husserl put it – simply because the very value of life is realized first through a "loving" relationship, for instance, that of a parent and a child.[222] This simply means that the value of life can only be acknowledged within a social context: it is only through other conscious subjects that my life can be treated not as means but as an end in itself. Here, Husserl ends up affirming the basic insight of Aristotle and Fichte according to which "self-love" is the essential condition for the love of the other. In order to value others, I must be acknowledged as valuable myself:

> My life is nothing for itself; it is one with the life of the others; it is a piece in the unity of the life of the community and reaches be

[220] HuaXXXVII: 240.

[221] "Wir leben nicht nur nebeneinander, sondern ineinander. Wir bestimmen einander personal von Person zu Person, von Ich zu Ich, und unser Wille geht nicht nur auf die anderen als umweltliche Sachen, sondern in die anderen, er erstreckt sich in das fremde Wollen hinein, das Wollen des anderen und zugleich unser Wollen ist, so dass seine Tat, wenn auch in verschieden abgewandelter Weise, zu unserer Tat werden kann." Husserl, WL 217. Hart 1992a: 248. Translation modified.

[222] "Kein Leben ohne Liebe, und jedes Leben wird erst bewusst in eins mit einem Liebesbewusstsein, einer Liebesdeckung." WL: 210. See also HuaXIV: 165–166.

> yond this into the life of humanity. I cannot evaluate my life without evaluating the interwoven life of others.[223]

This is not to say, however, that the value of the individual would be completely determined by other subjects. "For itself" is not the same as "in itself". Rather, this idea points towards the essential intertwinement of my ethical comportment in regard to the life of others, which gives this comportment its proper form. As we saw in the second part of this work, Husserl conceived the individuality of the transcendental subjectivity as the *abstraction* of the *concrete* monadic totality. In ethical terms, this would mean that my freedom and my responsibility, which are the necessary factors of my ethical stance, achieve their concrete form only *with* the freedom and responsibility of others. Therefore, as Husserl puts it, love must include within itself "an interest in assisting the other"[224] – love expresses the ethical imperative to help the other to enhance and preserve the value of his or her own life. Love aims at helping the others to attain their true self in practice (*dem Anderen zu seinem wahren Selbst praktisch zu helfen*).[225]

> As a lover in the community of love (friendship) […] I observe the beloved not merely as someone who lives so-and-so […] he is not there in my field of being, but I live in his life, I live with it, and the same goes the other way round.[226]

It is exactly here that Husserl's and Paul's ideals of body politic meet. As in the case of the body of an individual, physical pain is never merely in a particular limb or section but is felt in the whole body, a suffering that takes place in a "healthy community" never affects only its particular members. Joy, happiness, pain, or social injustices are all of course experienced by individual subjects, *but they can be lived as common*.[227]

The unity of communal person, however, should not be taken for granted; it can be broken. This happens when a body politic experiences

[223] "Mein Leben ist aber nichts für sich; es ist einig mit dem Leben der anderen, es ist Stück in der Einheit des Gemeinschaft lebens und reicht darfiber hinaus ins Leben der Menschheit. Ich kann nicht mein Leben werten, ohne das mitverflochtene Leben der anderen zu werten". WL 209–210 Translation in Hart 1992a, 294.
[224] "Die Liebe bestimmt ein Interesse der Fremdförderung […]." HuaXIV: 166.
[225] HuaXXXVII: 241.
[226] "Als Liebender in der Liebesgemeinschaft (Freundschaft) […] betrachte ich […] ihn nicht nur als so und so Lebenden, er ist nicht nur als das in meinem Seinsfeld, sondern ich lebe in seinem Leben, ich lebe es mit, und auch ich bin für ihn evtl." HuaXV: 512.
[227] Cf. Paul: "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it" (1. Cor. 12:26).

a certain *paralysation* by which we lose the ability to empathize with the pain (or joy) of others. This is the moment when culture turns "barbaric": when a society experiences an inner dispersion by which the ability to mirror oneself through others, to feel for others, is lost. The loss of empathy can take place through growing class divisions or ethnic conflicts, but it can also be fostered through such intellectual practices that present the other as somehow fundamentally alien, differentiated by an alleged cultural-historical abyss – an absolute "axiological asymmetry". For this reason, we need to constantly remind ourselves of the fundamental bond that binds us together.

Husserl was well aware of the counterargument according to which this "living in the other" might entail the loss of individual self-responsibility.[228] Against this suspicion, Husserl argued that instead of doing away with the inextricable difference that prevails between I and the other, love denoted a specific elevation of the individual and her responsibility: "The one who loves does not lose himself in love, but lives, in an especially elevated way, as I in the beloved."[229] Here, Husserl comes remarkably close to Hegel's definition of love as a peculiar self-alienation, by which subject returns to himself in order to find his true identity. "Love means in general terms the consciousness of my unity with another," writes Hegel in the *Philosophy of Right*, "so that I am not in selfish isolation but win my self-consciousness only as the renunciation of my independence and through knowing myself as the unity of myself with another and of the other with me."[230] As Hegel put it in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, the essential insight of Christianity was that even God discovers himself by alienat-

[228] According to Buckley's suggestive criticism, Husserl's notion of *Liebesgemeinschaft* might still leave room for an idea of "authentic domination" (1992: 139), which founds itself on the perfectly uniform, universally functioning reason. While I believe this criticism is partially justified, I believe the *Liebesgemeinschaft* ought to be treated in terms of a moral discourse which does not delineate the any political institutions (or relations of domination) as such. Reason, in its most general, ethical sense, entailed merely the idea of rational self-responsibility – as such, it presented itself as a counterstrategy to the very idea of political domination through power.

[229] "*Der Liebende verliert sich* nicht in der Liebe, sondern in besonders erhöhter Weise lebt er als Ich im Geliebten." Ms. F I 24 29a: Quoted in Roth 1960: 117. Translation in Hart 1992a: 243.

[230] "Liebe heißt überhaupt das Bewußtsein meiner Einheit mit einem anderen, so daß ich für mich nicht isoliert bin, sondern mein Selbstbewußtsein nur als Aufgebung meines Fürsichseins gewinne und durch das Mich-Wissen, als der Einheit meiner mit dem anderen und des anderen mit mir." Hegel, GW 14.1: §158.

ing himself in this world (in the figure of Christ); even God finds his true essence through the other. "For love is a distinguishing of two, who nevertheless are absolutely not distinguished for each other," Hegel writes:

> The consciousness or feeling of the identity of the two – to be outside of myself and in the other – this is love. I have my self-consciousness not in me but in the other. I am satisfied and have peace with myself only in this other – and I *am* only because I have peace with myself; if I did not have it, then I would be a contradiction that falls to pieces. This other, because it likewise exists outside itself, has its self-consciousness only in me, and both the other and the I are only this consciousness of being-outside-ourselves and of our identity; we are only this intuition, feeling, and knowledge of our unity. This is love, and without knowing that *love is both a distinguishing and the sublation of the distinction*, one speaks emptily of it. [231]

As I would like to see it, for Hegel as well as for Husserl, *love* is the title for the identity-in-difference that constitutes the compassionate unity of the ideal community. As Hegel accentuates, love is not assimilation: in love, I do not simply want to become *like* the beloved nor do I wish to make the beloved like me. On the contrary, in the act of love it is exactly the *indispensable alienness of the other* that I wish to sustain and cherish. But at the same time, by helping the other to sustain her particularity and personality, I am also becoming more aware of my own uniqueness – in this regard, love is indeed "co-generative". Take, for instance, a parent who encourages her children to pursue a completely different vocation than her own: while this encouragement implies that the child must be treated as someone who makes her own choices, it also implies that the parent is, in a way, irreplaceable. Alienating one's dreams, wishes, or inclinations into another person would also imply that this person can simply replace

[231] "Denn die Liebe ist ein Unterscheiden zweier, die doch füreinander schlechthin nicht unterschieden sind. Das Bewußtsein, Gefühl dieser Identität dieser beiden – dieses, außer mir und in dem Anderen zu sein – ist die Liebe: Ich habe mein Selbstbewußtsein nicht in mir, sondern im Anderen, aber dieses Andere, in dem nur ich befriedigt bin, meinen Frieden mit mir habe – und ich bin nur, indem ich Frieden mit mir habe; habe ich den nicht, so bin ich der Wiederspruch, der auseinanderfällt – dies Andere, indem es ebenso außer sich ist, hat sein Selbstbewußtsein nur in mir, und beide sind nur dieses Bewußtsein ihres Außersichseins und ihrer Identität, dies Anschauen, dies Fühlen, dies Wissen der Einheit. Das ist die Liebe, und es ist ein leeres Reden, das Reden von Liebe, ohne zu wissen, daß sie das Unterscheiden und das Aufheben des Unterschieds ist." Hegel 1984: 201–202. My italics.

me – that I was only a contingent agent of my actions. For this reason, love must be seen as the inclination to sustain one's personality through an encounter with the other.

We are now able to amplify the argument presented at the end of part 4.2, namely, the idea according to which self-responsibility finds its genuine realization only within the infinite horizon of community. To define this continuity in terms of love would entail that I do not simply imagine that the others would take up my beliefs, values, or inclinations *as such*; again, this would mean that my agency could be treated as a mere contingency. Rather, the personality of my accomplishments is best confirmed not by blind adoration but through a critical relation towards them. The value of my labor is essentially dependent on its capability to make others free. For this reason, love, as a movement that takes place within the generative context, implies essentially the movement of renewal.

As Laura Werner points out in her work *The Restless Love of Thinking*, one of the reasons why Alexander Kojève, in his interpretation of the dialectics of history, neglected Hegel's notion of love was that it was unable to explain the essentially conflictual character of historical development. History, according to this reading, was to be understood as a struggle for freedom and recognition whose basic blueprint was to be defined through the dialectics of Master and Slave.[232] As Hegel himself put it in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, what the "play of love" (*Spiel der Liebe*) – characteristic solely to the unfolding of divine intelligence – lacked was "the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labor of the negative."[233] In other words, what the idea of love lacked was the inherent "cunning of reason", which realizes itself in the seemingly irrational and violent outbursts of human history.

As I would like to claim, however, Husserl's reflections on the teleological development of philosophy provide us with a possibility of articulating an idea of love as a category of historical development. While it is true – as I have emphasized in several occasions – that Husserl's own view of the development of European history was essentially that of one-sided expansionism, it is also possible to point towards another aspect of this

[232] Werner 2007: 91.
[233] "[…] wenn der Ernst, der Schmerz, die Geduld und Arbeit des Negativen darin fehlt." GW 9: §19.

development. As I argued in the beginning of this part, Husserl's emphasis on the teleological development of philosophy had pointed towards a need to articulate a more positive account on the idea of historical presuppositions (*Voraussetzungen*) as the necessary point of departure for a genuine philosophical reflection. What this idea entailed was that philosophical self-responsibility, although it necessarily unfolds in the life of the individual, pertains an essential "debt" to past philosophers: we are able to know more because of them. And although our relation towards them entails an element of negativity – we do not simply accept the choices made by past philosophers – this negativity is by no means destructive (as Hegel took it to be). On the contrary, we arrive at a genuinely unique philosophical position only by recognizing our situatedness within the overall generative development of history. This was, of course, the medieval idea of "standing on the shoulders of giants", attributed first to Bernard of Chartres by John of Salisbury in his *Metalogicon*. "We frequently know more," writes John, "not because we have moved ahead by our own natural ability, but because we are supported by the [mental] strength of others, and possess riches that we have inherited from our forefathers."[234] Is this not exactly how love – finding one's own personal existence through others – appears in the course of history?

Is it, however, possible to locate the motive of love also in the political domain? We have seen that according to the classical Hegelian thesis, the teleological development of human sociality that begins with the one-sided recognition reached its complete form in the state institutions, which endowed the individual members with their basic autonomy. Beginning with the "abstract individuality" of the market-place, where individuals recognize themselves as two parts of a reciprocal exchange with their individual wills (e.g. I want to exchange certain goods with another person, but this entails that we want different things), it was through the state institutions that this will could be articulated as genuinely *shared*. A political community, which prescribes the general laws and principles of common life, relies essentially on a reciprocal relation in which individual subjects recognize each other as the representatives of the same will; although I might not be happy with each individual decisions within the political domain, I still want the state to exist. Especially in the discourse entertained

[234] Bertrand of Chartes 1967: 167.

in the *Philosophy of Right*, the state represented the ultimate *telos* of human communality, the "absolute unmoved end in itself, in which freedom comes into its supreme right."[235] This end, argues Hegel, materializes itself in political institutions (i.e., the law), and as such, it is able to overcome the naturality of human love:

> Love, however, is feeling, i.e., ethical life in the form of something natural. In the state, feeling disappears; there we are conscious of unity as law; there the content must be rational and known to us.[236]

It is perhaps evident why Husserl, in search for an interpersonal relation that would correspond with the infinite horizon of philosophy, could not abide within the statist framework of recognition. Unlike the *telos* of Hegelian recognition that can be attained through political institutions – I can recognize the other as equal and free, and thus put an end to the relation of master and slave – in the case of Husserl's *Liebesgemeinschaft*, no such end can be directly delineated. On the contrary, the *telos* of love – the good of the other, his or her becoming responsible – can be infinitely cherished and ameliorated. Like personal renewal, this relation relies on an infinite striving, which does not satisfy itself in any "objective" state of affairs:

> The beautiful is loved. But love is without an end. It is only love in the infinity of love and it carries thereby as its correlate the infinity of pure value itself. As love of the creative I, love is infinite longing for the beautiful.[237]

Understood this way, the relation of "community of love" to political institutions could be described in terms of a Kantian "regulative idea". With regard to the domain of politics, the community of love would represent an essentially "transcendent" ideal, which cannot be attained within this world. However, it also functions as a critical device of political thinking which constantly has the tendency to settle for those institutions that we

[235] GW 14.1: 201 (§258).

[236] "Die Liebe ist aber Empfindung, das heißt die Sittlichkeit in Form des Natürlichen; im Staate ist sie nicht mehr: da ist man sich der Einheit als des Gesetzes bewußt, da muß der Inhalt vernünftig sein, und ich muß ihn wissen." GW 14.1: §158

[237] "Das Schöne wird geliebt. Die Liebe ist aber ohne Ende. Sie ist nur Liebe in der Unendlichkeit des Liebens, und sie trägt dabei ständig als Korrelat in sich die Unendlichkeit des reinen Wertes selbst. Sie ist als Liebe des schöpferischen Ich ins Unendliche Sehnsucht nach dem Schönen […]." HuaVIII: 14–15. See Hart 1992a: 226; Schuhmann 1988: 171ff.

have acquired: it would, for instance, seek to overcome those political, cultural, and ethnic divisions which hinder us from empathizing with one another. This stance, however, would go against the basic perception according to which *there is love in the world*.

How could these two stances be reconciled? How can the community of love be an infinite *telos* – yet something which reveals itself in this world? The first answer concerns the quantitative definition. While it is evident that my experience is intertwined with those of the other, this intertwining is not lived primarily as universal, but as an exclusive bond (for instance, between a parent and a child, a circle of friends and so on). As I become a part of a generative framework which binds me into a particular homeworld, I (most often) develop affection towards those persons with whom I share a common heritage, and, consequently, with whom I can empathize without concrete hindrances. As for instance Jeremy Rifkin has shown in his *The Emphatic Civilization* (2010), different mediums of communication play a crucial role in our ability to empathize with the joy or suffering of others. The Ancient world of script and codex was able to nurture the belonging-together of tribes and relatively small religious communities; the emergence of national consciousness was tightly connected to modern printing techniques, which made it possible to broaden one's daily field of interest to a relatively broad domain. We know that in many respects, the 20th century audiovisual means of communication have brought the famine and suffering of distant peoples closer to us – although these means do not guarantee the realization of intercultural empathy. Instead, to follow Husserl's recurring emphasis, the universal distention of empathy must be lived as the inner demand of reason, which finds its true essence through the social domain: "I can be completely happy (*glücklich*) only when the humankind as a whole can also be happy."[238]

In this regard, the idea of *Liebesgemeinschaft* is best understood in connection to the idea of "infinite task". Understood this way, this idea would recognize that love, like reason, does exist in the world as a possibility of human action, however, as constantly dissociated from its infinite ideal, its universal realization. Like the philosophical "community of theory", which constantly has before itself the open horizon of future develop-

[238] "Ich kann nur ganz glücklich sein, wenn die Menschheit als Ganzes es sein kann, und sie kann es eben nur in diesem Sinne sein." WL: 233.

ment, the "community of love" would also abstain from entrenching itself into particular political institutions. Instead, it would become understandable only as a responsibility for the Pauline "neighbor", for that *infinite alienness* of this world. (As Husserl put it in a letter, he understood himself "as a free Christian [...] in the sense of an infinite task"[239].)

In a way, Husserl's idea of a universal community of love points towards a completely new type of logic which transcends both contemporary globalization as well as today's political universalism. By globalization we understand the process of intercultural commerce in which cultural differences are not only tolerated but effectively employed in order to identify certain goods as authentic, original, personal, and so on. This is what Hegel meant by the abstract individuality of the market place. We know that multinational corporations, for instance, adapt their products to suit the different global and local environments. Food markets are a good example of this.[240] Against the often-presented concern, globalization does not simply do away with differences of identity, but instead, it corroborates and even intensifies these differences in order to sustain the element of transgression. This is what Paul meant by arguing that desire is "aroused by law": I want that which I do not have; that which falls out of the categories of familiar, customary, permissible and so on. It could be argued that the model of global consumer rests on the endless variation of mystified "others", who function as the *raisons d'être* for cultural transgressions, which are easily commercialized: I can easily "try" Indian or Thai food; I can burn incenses to get the genuine bazaar experience; I can travel to Lapland in order to witness "real Christmas" etc. While these experiences give us information on foreign cultures, they most often do not transform this encounter into the form of shared will; instead, their appeal rests essentially on their enigmatic character.[241]

By universalism, however, we understand those processes of transnational co-operation which aim at creating institutions and norms that could be seen as genuine products of a common will. Take, for instance,

[239] HuaDokVII: 207.

[240] For instance, through the so-called Protected Geographical Status (PGS) the European Union alone has guaranteed a protected status for more than 1000 types or brands of regional foods.

[241] Thus globalization – as I would maintain – is essentially the movement of *nomos*, delimitation: it employs generative distances in order to sustain the structure of desire towards the unseen, mysterious.

the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, the International Criminal Court, or the Kyoto protocol – these are all examples of universal political resolutions or institutions, which are often seen as prime examples of a transnational co-operation. As such, they can be treated as good examples of a development towards shared global responsibility. The problem of these forms of co-operation, however, is that they often seem to legitimate all too easily the underlying political institutions, that is, the nation-states. As we know of the aforementioned examples, without the support of nation-states international law is basically inoperative. While this kind of universal co-operation produces good results in some areas of global interaction, it also strengthens national sovereignty, which makes it harder to interfere with injustices inside particular nations.

For this reason, I believe, we ought to take the political implications of phenomenology beyond mere institutional transformations. Philosophical universalism, understood in this Husserlian sense, is a process which takes its point of departure from the co-operation of individual subjects, and by doing so it targets its critique towards the existing institutions that regulate our relations towards other human beings. As such, it is a critical relation towards all constituted borders, frontiers and limits that prevent the realization of the common task of philosophy: with regard to the political domain, *philosophy is essentially a negative attitude*. However, it is exactly this negativity which makes possible the emergence of a genuine ethical stance within the generative context. This is what Merleau-Ponty meant when he described Husserl's vision of a conscious historical development in terms of "permanent revolution": philosophy is constantly critical towards the concrete, the empirical and the institutional; however, it understands that these instituted accomplishments hide within themselves latent horizons of sense and meaning, which can only be activated or discovered in retrospect.[242] Philosophy, in this Husserlian sense, seeks to materialize itself in cultural accomplishments, but it also refuses to take any concrete formation of "objective spirit" as the ultimate *telos* of human communality. Instead, the universal is discovered only as the movement or process, in

[242] "Reactivation is not only the making explicit of what was implicit, but awakening of the total, originary intention of which it was only a partial expression. […] Husserl rediscovers here one of the senses of permanent revolution: the anticipation of the future in the total past and its non-clarified horizons. Each epoch anticipates and is late for itself." Merleau-Ponty 2010: 81.

which humankind both creates and sublates culture – in which individual subjects become more conscious of their genuine essence. This is what, I believe, Husserl implies in his late manuscript *Monadologie*:

> The universe of monads, a monadic universal unity, is in process of enhancement *in infinitum*. And this process is necessarily one of constant development of sleeping monads to patent monads and development to a world which constitutes itself always against through monads [...] And this world-constitution is a constitution of an ever higher humanity and supra-humanity (*Übermenschentums*) in which everything grows conscious of its true being and takes on the form of perfection or of a free self-constituting reason.[243]

As Husserl cryptically remarks, this movement is what he understands with God. God, according to his phenomenological position, ought to be understood not as the perfectly rational substance or the totality of monads itself but as "the entelechy residing in the universe of monads as the idea of the infinite *telos* of the development of absolute."[244] If we were to subscribe to the concepts of God and absolute, which, as I believe, are highly controversial in connection to phenomenology, it is necessary to reinterpret them in post-eschatological (or post-metaphysical) terms: although history does not completely lack progress and perfection, they should not be taken as pre-given categories of historical development. If there is a divine element in the life of humanity, it can be discovered in the generative development of humankind, in its horizon of infinite development. This horizon, however, is possible only on the basis of a perpetual critical reflexivity that is targeted towards those beliefs, practices, and habitualities according to which we live by. In human history, freedom and renewal belong together; and together they nurture the utopian consciousness which is the greatest capacity of the political animal.

[243] "Das Monadenall, eine monadische All-Einheit, ist im Prozess einer Steigerung *in infinitum*, und dieser Prozess ist notwendig ein beständiger der Entwicklung von schlafenden Monaden zu patenten Monaden und Entwicklung zu einer sich in Monaden immer wieder konstituierenden Welt, wobei diese Welt konstituierenden Monaden als patent konstituierende nicht alle sind [...]. Und diese Weltkonstitution ist Konstitution eines immer höheren Menschen- und Übermenschentums, in dem das All seines eigenen wahren Seins bewusst wird und die Gestalt eines frei sich selbst zur Vernunft oder Vollkommenheitsgestalt konstituierenden annimmt." HuaXV: 610. Translation in Hart 1992a: 336.

[244] HuaXV: 610

Is this not what Paul seems to imply in the first letter to the Corinthians, when he says that "The kingdom of God is not in word (*en logō*) but in power (*dynamis*)"?[245]

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It was indeed a sign of intellectual chauvinism that Europe, especially through the historical consciousness of modern age, saw itself as fulfilling what Hegel called the "march of God" – the inevitable triumph of universal reason through the societal and political institutions of modernity. However, at the same time, it would be an indolence of thought to give up on this connection between historical teleology and universalism. Teleology, as I have shown in this last part of the work, not only functions as an inalienable tool of self-understanding but it also animates our societal and political imagination by providing it with a horizon of possible development; it is only through a teleological understanding that philosophy – in its search for a shared world – can execute its genuine task.

[245] 1. Cor. 4:20. Cf. also Luke 17:20–21: "Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come. He answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with a visible display. People won't say, 'Look! Here it is!' or "There it is!" For the kingdom of God is among you."

Conclusion

This work began as a reflection of a specific paradox. As I argued in the beginning, Husserl's reflections on Europe took their point of departure from the recognition of a particular cultural sickness, the "crisis" of Europe. On the basis of Husserl's characterizations, I defined the basic sense of this crisis as a peculiar "loss of meaning", as the inability to justify the basic beliefs, values and practices of a culture – the ineptitude to bring its aims into lively intuition. As a cultural phenomenon, the crisis became painstakingly manifest after the First World War, which uncovered the unfounded nature of the 19th century progressive beliefs relating to techno-scientific development as well as to the political institutions of the European nation-states. However, in his attempt to comprehend the genuine origin of this distress, Husserl set himself to uncover the teleological development of modern scientific rationality, which, through the Galilean matrix of exact mathematical ideality, had dismissed the questions of normativity, of purpose, aim and teleology. As a result of the Galilean step, Husserl argued, the ideas of self-responsibility and autonomy could no longer be articulated in the context of scientific rationality, and Europe – what was still the name for the idea of progress in the philosophy of the nineteenth century – could only be interpreted in terms of organic or mechanistic unity of peoples and nations. Thus, it may seem surprising that alongside with this state of confusion and disintegration, Husserl argued that the world was still witnessing the "spectacle of Europeanization", simply, the world becoming all more European. This process – for which the term "globalization" might be more suitable today – was not a mere recent phenomenon: Husserl was well aware that the expansion of Europe (or the West) and the establishment of its hegemonic status had been a rather protracted his-

torical process whose leading thrust may be traced back to the colonialist motives of the Roman Empire.[1] Still, despite the various crises of Europe that Husserl was referring to as well as the frenzy nationalism of the early twentieth century, this spectacle had not suffered any major setbacks.

Hence the basic paradox: How can something that is deeply in crisis be expanding to all over the world?

As I have argued in this work, according to Husserl's account it was not so much the entity Europe that was in crisis, but the principle of universal reason that had accompanied its development since the Antiquity. In any of its historical phases had Europe realized this principle in an unrestricted pure form; rather, its history was a series of attempts to interpret the idea in a worldly context and by worldy limitations, i.e., to give it a concrete form through cultural practices, territorial rearrangements and political institutions. From Plato's political idealism to Hellenic and Kantian cosmopolitanism, from the Christian idea of universal congregation to modern theories of universal natural law, the history of European universalism was to be understood as a series of struggles for a greater clarity on universalism and its conditions of possibility, but also as a series of monstrous articulations that served as a justification for different forms of European imperialism. In this sense, the history of European universalism was nothing less than a "history of crises": a history of one-sided interpretations that announced themselves in what Husserl called the "apparent failure of rationalism".[2] However, as the explicitly non-universalistic movement of Fascism was to show, the simple renouncement of this principle entailed only the emergence of new monsters – what Husserl, still in the beginning of the 1920s, called the "juggernauts of power-ideas in arms", or, the "false gods of nationalism".[3]

Husserl, accordingly, began to see the task of phenomenology in a new cultural-societal light: its task was to provide not only the sciences with an evident foundation but more generally, to articulate a new idea of cultural critique based on an idea of rational internationalism.[4]

[1] HuaXXIX: 16
[2] HuaVI: 347.
[3] HuaXXVII: 117.
[4] HuaXXVII: 240.

Let us recapitulate the basic argument of this work. In the first part of the work, I approached the topic of Europe by focusing on the idea of the European crisis as a peculiarly modern phenomenon. I argued that although Husserl's late reflections on Europe were basically inseparable from the phenomenon of crisis, his position was primarily reactive rather than assertive: Husserl did not invent the crisis discourse but he inherited it. By doing so, he aimed at reformulating the basic presuppositions of this discourse and these concepts anew. Through my reading of the ideas of modern political community and historical teleology, I showed that it was not as much the particular form of culture "Europe" that was in crisis but the general principle of rational life that had become effective since the birth of Greek philosophy. This principle, or what Husserl often called "the idea of Europe", was to be distinguished from its historically realized form: Europe as a particular cultural lifeworld. During the modern times, this crisis announced itself, first of all, in the loss of natural human sociality; however, it was also made possible by the novel framework of historical teleology, which gave birth to the new ideas of cultural transformation and periodization. Whereas for the philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the crisis was still discussed in connection to the basic framework of progressive historicity – it was coined, for instance, with ideas of social and political revolution – for the academic debates of the early twentieth century this faith began to appear as a mere illusion. As a concept, the crisis seemed to lose its connotations of openness and active resoluteness, and it was now attached to the novel eschatological visions of inevitable decline that were implied in the Christian connotations of this notion. Despite the occasional apocalyptic undertone of Husserl's remarks, I argued that his position was best understood in terms of active resoluteness. Through his reflections on the structure of human rationality, there emerged a novel possibility of discussing the crisis as a phenomenon inextricably bound to the habitual and sedimented character of subjectivity and meaning and resolvable by a renewal of the community.

In the second part of the work, I first discussed the basic conditions of this habituation and sedimentation in the new understanding of phenomenology as a genetic notion that also investigates the *generative* processes of meaning formation. By contrasting Husserl's account of transcendentality with that of Kant's, I argued that the phenomenological idea of subjectiv-

ity was to be understood as fundamentally temporal, finite and singular – but also essentially tied to the nexus of intersubjective relations that reach beyond the life of the individual. Thus, the sphere of sociality turned out to be not just a domain among others but the most essential topic in regard to the constitution of a common world. With the help of his concept of lifeworld, I argued, Husserl aimed at capturing this constitution both in its essential universality – lifeworld as an a priori structure of experience – as well as in its normative (e.g., cultural and historical) specification. By doing so, I moved on to the analysis on the territorial aspects of this specification in the constitution of domesticity and alienness through the transcendental structure of homeworld and alienworld. Although this structure implied a certain idea of intransitivity (i.e., I cannot simply put myself into the position of the alien due to the generative depth of her tradition), unlike empathy, which founds itself on the essential interstice of the streams of consciousness, the structural difference of home and alien had its common foundation in the lifeworld as a universally shared horizon of experience. By showing how the constitution of a particular community is always tied to a certain set of cultural accomplishments – and how their relation can actually be read in terms of a specific paradox of subjectivity – I argued for the relevance of Husserl's idea of "personalities of a higher order".

In the third part of this work, I turned my focus on the birth of Greek philosophy and its revolutionary effect on the ideas of communality and historicity. This event, I showed, was to be understood not only in terms of an individual attitude but as a a geo-historical-social movement, which had its foundation in the specific relativization of individual homeworlds and their traditionalities. Philosophy itself, I argued, was to be understood as a specific *generative transformation* that resulted in a novel awareness of cultural particularity and a critique of limits. For Husserl, this was the founding motive of the idea of Europe – it was the first world-historical culture that was able to confront its typicality and to understand its own particularity not as a given but as a question to be asked. As I showed, Husserl's understanding of the effect of Greek philosophy was not restricted merely to the scope of scientific endeavor, for instance, to its novel dialectical method or the systematic accumulation of knowledge. Instead, the breakthrough of Greek philosophy entailed a more profound transition

in the very notion of culture itself – a new idea of communal existence striving towards goals and accomplishments of a new kind, i.e., ideas that are only partially achievable in concrete action. Following Husserl's own concurrent use of the term, I referred to this idea under the heading of universal culture, and respectively, I employed the term "universalism" to denote its realization in different domains of cultural co-operation. I argued that this transition had its most powerful effects in the spheres of communality and historicity that were now rearticulated in the light of a twofold liminal transformation. The idea of Europe, as understood by Husserl, was born out of the will to overcome the limits of one's own homeworld in two regards, spatial and temporal. First, philosophy entailed a specific relativization of all territorial frontiers, and secondly, it aimed at transcending the pre-philosophical framework of teleology through a novel idea of "unlimited task". These transformations, I argued, could also be regarded from a more concrete standpoint, motivating a novel understanding of political universalism. Instead of a merely personalistic or solely interpersonal account of ethical life, the Platonic influence of Husserl's position was best understood as a specific intertwining of the two – for Plato, individual and social ethics belonged essentially together. Thus, the political function of philosophy was not to be understood in terms of simple leadership or authoritarian implementation of a particular model but as the critical observance of inherited institutions and practices and the motivation of a universal self-responsibility.

In the fourth and last part of the work, I articulated this idea of communality and historicity with the concepts of Husserlian phenomenology. By arguing for the indispensability of the historical-critical approach in this context, I emphasized the necessity of rearticulating the ideas of historical teleology and progress on the basis of Husserlian *epoché*. The idea of teleology, I showed, was to be understood as a category of critical reflection that is executed on the basis of the present moment; as such, it was to be conceived as essentially critical towards all pre-given narratives on the course of history. Moreover, the teleological reflections were entertained not merely in regard to past development but for the sake of an open horizon of future development. By showing how Husserl's reflections on ethics took their point of departure from the division between absolute and relative ideals, I argued for the essential inexhaustibility of histori-

cal development on the basis of critical renewal. Thus phenomenology, besides opposing all forms of historical determinism, was to be conceived as fundamentally critical towards all ideas on "the end of history", i.e., the realization of the normative ideals of humanity in the course of worldly time. By redefining the field of phenomenology in regard to the radically open horizon of historical development, I argued for the indispensability of rearticulating phenomenological philosophy as an essentially communal-critical undertaking. On the basis of these reflections, I turned my gaze to the political implications of Husserl's theory of communality and historicity. By discussing the temporal and generative implications of Husserl's social ethics, I argued for a novel understanding of the motive and sense of political idealism in Husserlian phenomenology. Instead of a ready-made static model of communal co-operation and its respective cultural-political institutions, this idealism was to be understood in terms of dynamic "utopianism", which, unlike the tradition of European-Occidental utopian thought, could accept and make sense of the necessary transformation of its ideals. Finally, by discussing the idea of universalism on the basis of the aforementioned considerations, I argued for the indispensability of rearticulating the normative ideal of transcendental intersubjectivity on the basis of Husserl's ambiguous notion of "community of love" (*Liebesgemeinschaft*). By discussing this notion in regard to the context of Pauline discourse of apolitical communality, I argued for the necessity of understanding the motive of universalism in regard to the fundamental intertwinedness of human subjectivity – an intertwinedness of feeling and willing that is constantly obliterated through particular identity-positions that separate human beings from one another. Through the concept of love, I maintained, Husserl was able to account for a specific idea of intersubjective relatedness that does not resign itself to a particular set of social or political institutions, but is able to project for itself an infinite horizon of future development.

These reflections made possible a set of further questions. If, indeed, we ought to consider Europe not as a mere continent but as an idea of rational life and universal culture in general, how should we understand this relation between the name and the idea? Should we interpret their relation, as Husserl did, in terms of a specific "entelechy [...] which holds sway throughout all the changing shapes of Europe and accords to them

the sense of a development toward an ideal shape of life and being as an eternal pole"?[5] Were this the case, it would be hard to account for the different alienations or breaks from this tradition, for instance, the violent and expansionist history of the Roman Empire or Western Christianity, or, the imperialist tradition of the modern nation-states of Europe. It would indeed be naïve to consider the emergence of Fascism or European anti-Semitism as mere aberrations of this tradition, as contingent realities merely accompanying the entelechy of the universal ideal. Against Husserl's understanding of the European history as "a battle between the awakened reason and the powers of historical reality"[6], we should account for the one-sided, suppressive, and even totalitarian tendencies of this "awakened reason". The fact that Plato's reflections of the best possible republic were accompanied by a set of "totalitarian" practices concerning eugenics, the division of classes and the freedom of artistic creation should not be interpreted as mere historical prejudices of the time – they were, at least partially, consistent consequences of his static ideal of the *polis*. A similar critique can be entertained, for instance, in regard to Hegel's historical reflections on the peoples of Africa: by simply equating the African character with the pre-universalistic and pre-cultural stage of spirit's development, he could coherently conclude that their Europeanization would be not only necessary but inevitable.

In this regard, however, I believe that Husserl's reflections on the phenomenology of progress provide important insights concerning this kind of reasoning. What Husserl envisaged with his insistence of treating the progress as a category of the will was the critical idea later articulated by Adorno and Horkheimer in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947) according to which *progress*, insofar as it is proclaimed as a category of being or history, is always accompanied by a *myth* or a mythological dimension that can never be absolutely verified. Historical narratives that point towards the inevitable triumph or decline of a culture are necessarily one-sided and partial. As we can observe from our contemporary perspective, Kant's

[5] "[…] daß unserem europäischen Menschentum eine Entelechie eingeboren ist, die den europäischen Gestaltenwandel durchherrscht und ihm den Sinn einer Entwicklung auf eine ideale Lebens- und Seinsgestalt als einen ewigen Pol verleiht." HuaVI: 320.

[6] "Es geht durch die ganze „europäische" Geschichte von ihrem Anfangen an dieser Kampf zwischen der erwachten Vernunft und den Mächten der historischen Wirklichkeit." HuaXXVII: 106.

optimistic history of cosmopolitanism was based on the pacific aspects of global trade-relations – as he proclaimed, "the spirit of commerce, which is incompatible with war, sooner or later gains the upper hand in every state". What he dismissed, however, were the novel motives for conflicts between the imperial powers resulting from the rivalry for material resources, or, the inherent instability of the global financial system, already quite apparent in the early 18th-century economic bubbles of John Law's Mississippi and the South Sea Company but also in the more recent crises of the European economic constitution.

Spengler was indeed right to prophesy a European decline at the beginning of the 1910s; what he failed to acknowledge, however, was the latent reformatory potential of the Faustian spirit of the Western world – the colossal destructivity of the two world wars was followed by a significant advancement in the development of transnational political organizations, which, at least in the mainland of Europe, were able to foster a successful period of peace. Following Adorno and Horkheimer, it is indeed possible to characterize these historical narratives – the particular historical interpretations on the teleological development of history – in terms of a "myth"; however, even myths contain within themselves an element of truth. What we need to acknowledge is the general structure of *contamination with the mythological* that accompanies all forms of historical teleology, a contamination whose essential one-sidedness can only be acknowledged in retrospect.

Hence, in regard to the history of European universalism, I believe it is possible to point towards several competing "narratives" that concern its historical development. These narratives ought to serve neither the belief in European supremacy nor the renouncement of this ideal, but our critical thinking that aims at articulating its conditions of possibility anew. Universalism, as I have argued, can only be accounted for in the overall teleological development of reason, which articulates itself always on the basis of a specific generative history: it *can* – and it *must* – understand itself always on the basis of a particular cultural and historical situation, in relation to the overall matrix of individual traditions. It is thus possible to account for Husserl's own idea of the "historical nonsense" of the "spectacle of Europeanization", i.e., the violent and unilateral history of this development. But we can also point towards another historical narrative

of European universalism based on self-criticism or even self-negation, and not solely on mythical constructions. We are only to think of Plato's critique of pre-Socratic philosophers in *The Sophist*, presented by the Eleatic Stranger – "Every one of them seems to tell us a story, as if we were children"[7] – referring to the attainment of autonomity through a specific *transcending* of the past. We can think of the beginning of Descartes' *Meditations* and his will to "to demolish everything completely and start again from the foundations", Nietzsche's account of the history of European philosophy, or, the last paragraph of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*: "*All previous philosophers* have interpreted the world in various ways, but the point is…". Besides the history of propagation, there is also another tradition of European universalism, and it is that of *negativity*, of *contesting the whole of previous tradition*. In our own times, as our whole political and intercultural framework relies on a positive definition of culture – a culture must mean a collection of practices and institutions which can be rendered into an account on the clash of civilizations – this tradition is, naturally, in danger. However, I believe that it is still the only way to resist what Ágnes Heller has vividly interpreted as the root of the contemporary malaise of cultural cynicism – the loss of historical consciousness. "Europe is on a crash course in relativizing its own culture," Heller writes,

> so much so that it arrived at a stage of advanced cultural masochism. Therefore, it lacks any future-oriented social fantasy apart from its technological forms of governance, having become a theatre without performers, a place where grand narratives of another, better future in politics, social questions, or anything else, are no longer forged.[8]

I believe Heller is right in pointing out that our contemporary distrust in political utopias does not result merely from the growing role of technocratic administration – what Max Weber called the "iron cage" (*stahlhartes Gehäuse*) of the modern social order – but perhaps even more vigorously, from the overarching sense of disappointment in the grand narratives of the past. Because our history is one of serious failures in political idealism – and because the contemporary hegemony of technocratic governance constantly reasserts its authority in regard to these ideas – we have lost

[7] Plato, *Soph.* 242c.
[8] Heller 1988: 154.

our faith in the redeeming potential of historical consciousness. While it is true that our political imagination cannot do without criticism, it is likewise true that without any idea of a historical teleology, this criticism is in constant danger of turning into mere skepticism, cynicism and nihilism. Thus teleology, in the phenomenological sense described in this work, should liberate us from the yoke of the present moment and serve the purpose of renewal.

* * *

We are living, I believe, in a time in which cultural environments and political cultures are shaped, perhaps more than ever, by the questions of territoriality and alienness, of historical narratives and the future of humanity at large. Moreover, we have become acquainted with powerful mediums of communication and interaction, which, by emerging on the basis of virtual geography, are making possible new forms of internationality and cosmopolitanism. Nevertheless, despite the justified concerns on the dissolution of national and ethnic traditions, of the disappearance of indigenous cultures, we are also experiencing a new phase of territorial demarcation on cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic grounds. In my view, the only reasonable conclusion, though very modest and general one, that can be drawn from this situation is the conviction according to which the mere universality of the medium – of capital, of mass communication, of the internet – is not yet enough. Genuine universality, as I have argued, must be accompanied by a radical reflection concerning the foundation of this idea in the notions of subjectivity and generativity. This reflection must be targeted to those intellectual and material capacities and conditions that make possible the genuinely self-reflexive and self-critical attitude; moreover, it must realize itself through the demythologization of social, political, and cultural identities. There is an essential abyss that separates "I" from the "other" – I have no access to the experience of the other – but this discrepancy is essentially different from those particular forms of generativity that have their common foundation in the shared world.

In this regard, I would like to follow Husserl's insight according to which Europe is perhaps more than a name. Europe, the philosophical idea, continues to serve as a title for the intersection of the particular and the universal.

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